

# **Problem Management Policy**

**April 6, 2015**

## Problem Management Policy

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### Document History

Name	Date	Description
R. Ward	April 6, 2015	Review by Individual IT Steering Committee Members

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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide definition of the Problem Management process, principles and roles, used across Discount Tire Organization. The Problem Management Process will work in conjunction with other Discount Tire processes related to ITIL and ITSM in order to provide quality IT services and increase value to Discount Tire.

### Scope

The Problem Management Policy applies to all providers of Discount Tire services and all requesters of services provided by Discount Tire.

In scope: (outlined in this governance document, and included but not limited to) Coverage of this policy and associated procedures apply to all IT production services, applications and system assets (physical and virtual), network infrastructure assets, all other supported IT assets (physical or virtual).

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Out of scope: (excluded from this governance document) Defined key performance indicators, 3<sup>rd</sup> party off-site vendor IT Problem Management process and activities. Incident Management and Major Incident Management process, policy, procedures, non-IT services and systems.

### Objectives

The primary objectives of Problem Management are to prevent problems and related incidents from happening, to eliminate recurring incidents and to minimize the impact of incidents that are not preventable, leading to increased service availability and quality. Problem Management focuses on implementing the appropriate corrective actions to address problems that negatively affect Discount Tire customers. Problem Management seeks to implement cost effective, permanent solutions to eliminate the root cause (*see definition of terms: Root Cause*) of incidents thereby preventing reoccurrence. Problem Management differs from the IT service restoration focus of Incident Management that often employs rapid, temporary solutions to restore service.

There are two approaches to Problem Management: Proactive and Reactive:

- Proactive Problem Management identifies problems by reviewing incident trends and non-incident data to predict that an incident is likely to (re-)occur.
- Reactive Problem Management identifies problems based upon review of multiple events (incidents) that exhibit common symptoms or in response to a single incident with significant impact (*see Definition of Terms: Major Incident*).

### Roles and Responsibilities

Each process requires specific roles to undertake defined responsibilities for process design, development, execution and management. More than one role may be assigned to an individual. Additionally, the responsibilities of one role may map to multiple individuals. One role is accountable for each process activity. With appropriate consideration of the required skills and managerial capability, this person may delegate certain responsibilities to other individuals. However, it is ultimately the job of the person who is accountable to ensure that the job gets done. Regardless of the mapping of responsibilities, specific roles are necessary for the proper operation & management of the Problem Management process.

**Problem Manager (Process Owner)** The Problem Manager is responsible for managing the lifecycle of all Problems. The Problem Manager is both Accountable and Responsible for ensuring the completeness of the following activities within the Problem process:

- Proactive Problem Identification
- Problem Categorization and Prioritization
- Problem Diagnosis and Resolution
- Problem Closure and Evaluation
- Chairing Major Problem Review and Retrospective Discussions
- Problem Management Metric Reporting and KPI review

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**Problem Owner (Domain Lead/SME/Engineer/etc.):** The Problem Owner takes “ownership” of the Problem record. The Problem Owner coordinates the activity and research within the individual Problem record by ensuring a root cause is identified, and either a workaround (*see definition of terms: Workaround*) or Problem resolution is defined. The Problem Owner then initiates any necessary change(s) to implement the resolution. The Problem Owner is Responsible for ensuring the completeness of the following activities within the Problem process:

- Problem Documentation and Diagnosis, Root Cause Research, and Issue Resolution
- Root Cause Research Coordination (in conjunction with Problem Manager)
- Problem Record (Re-)Assignment and/or escalation

**Assignee:** The Assignee is an individual or team who actively works with the Problem Owner, and is part of a specific expertise area (network, systems, applications, databases, etc.). The Assignee uses his or her technical expertise to help provide the Problem Owner with information necessary to determine a root cause or solution for the individual Problem. The Assignee is Responsible for ensuring the completeness of the following activities within the Problem process:

- Problem Documentation and Diagnosis, Root Cause Research, and Issue Resolution
- Problem Record (Re-)Assignment and/or escalation

**Contributor:** A contributor is an individual who may or may not be part of an assigned team, who provides knowledge, or assists with imputing relevant documentation or notes within a Problem record. This individual is neither Accountable nor Responsible for *specific* activities within the process, but provides a supportive role, valuable input, feedback, or knowledge.

### Policy

All Discount Tire employees involved with Problem Management creation, analysis, diagnosis, research, resolution, and root cause activity will comply with the Problem Management policy. This policy is to be read, understood, and adhered to by all IT support services, participating business services, and IT management staff. Product Owners and Vendor Representatives are responsible for ensuring that our vendors are also in compliance.

All Employees shall:

- Follow the Problem Management Process as outlined in the Problem Management Procedures Document, ensuring the proper documentation, escalation, and communication activity is being performed
- Engage Problem Management during Major Incident outages (*see definition of terms: Major Incident*)
- Participate in Problem Management Retrospective meetings as required (*see definition of terms: Retrospective*)
- Provide timely updates to Problem Records in accordance with the Key Performance Indicator (*see definition of terms: Key Performance Indicator*) expectations when that

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specific process participation and activity is required (*See Problem Management Standards Documentation: Key Performance Indicators - Problem Update Frequency*)

- Be subject to Problem Management continual Service Improvement Plan process (*see definition of terms: Service Improvement Plan*)
- Be subject to Problem Management KPI reviews, metrics, reporting, and audits

### Enforcement

The Problem Management process has a significant role in the success of IT Service Delivery and customer satisfaction. Failure to adhere to policy and procedures can result in disciplinary action by IT Leadership.

### Definition of Terms

- *Problem Management*: The process responsible for managing the lifecycle of all problems. Problem management proactively prevents incidents from happening and minimizes the impact of incidents that cannot be prevented.
- *Problem*: The underlying cause of one or more incidents whose root cause is usually not known
- *Root Cause*: The cause of an incident or problem to which you can apply a fix to resolve or prevent recurrence.
- *Workaround*: A temporary solution that reduces or eliminates the impact of an incident for which a permanent resolution is not yet available. Workaround's may be used indefinitely when the cost of a permanent fix outweighs the benefits of a permanent resolution.
- *Retrospective*: Retrospective meetings are held for problems where the impact was significant enough that management decides to review the process, actions taken, and lessons learned to be applied to future problems. During Retrospective meetings, Root Cause discussions may be held to help evaluate and identify next steps and action items.
- *Major Incident*: A Major Incident is an incident of the highest impact and highest urgency, where an outage is actual or imminent to one or more Critical Business Systems or Services. A Major Incident has the potential to deprive the business of one or more of these crucial services. Additionally the declaration of a Major Incident may be made outside of this definition at the discretion of the Problem Manager, Incident Manager, or any member of IT Leadership.
- *Key Performance Indicator (KPI)*: A metric that is used to help manage a process, IT Service or activity. Many metrics may be measured, but only the most important of these are defined as KPIs and used to actively manage and report on the process or IT Service.
- *Service Improvement Plan (SIP)*: A formal plan to implement improvements to a process or IT service.



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### Source

For questions about this policy, please contact IT Problem Management email:

[ITProblemManager@discounttire.com](mailto:ITProblemManager@discounttire.com)

### *DTC IT Steering Committee Approval*

Date	Comments

### *Internal Technology Use Only*

Standard	Mapping
ITIL V3	V3 2011 Service Management
HDI-PM	V1 2014 Problem Management