

## TEN TIPS FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

1. Stay in a good mood. Problems aren't supposed to be easy, otherwise they wouldn't be problems.
2. If you understand the problem but don't know how to start, try anything that makes sense to you. A diagram is often a good way to get going.
3. Explore—Take chances—Have a lot of scrap paper ready.
4. Keep trying—Don't give up. If one idea doesn't work, try another.
5. If you're not sure what's going on in the problem, try:
  - reading again carefully
  - taking notes or drawing pictures
  - looking up or asking about words you don't know
  - thinking about what the problem is asking for
6. Rest after you've explored for awhile, then try again.
7. Don't rush. Make sure you think clearly.
8. Keep an eye on what you're doing. Every few minutes, ask yourself:
  - Am I getting closer to answers the problem is asking for?
  - Should I keep doing what I'm doing or try something different?
9. When you do get an answer, check it. Does it make sense? Does it answer the question? If you do the problem a different way, will you still get the same answer?
10. Remember, there are no magic rules to take the place of thinking. (Even these tips can only help you get in the right frame of mind; they can't solve the problem for you.)