“IsR$^3$?” - A Problem-Solving Algorithm

In attempting to address a challenging situation, it may be helpful to spend some time, even a little bit of time, using this problem-solving method to:

- assess what you think you know about the situation, and
- come up with constructive ways of dealing with it.

Apply the method to plan how to deal with a situation, and to think whether you need more information.

I. **Issues/interests** – What do you see as the problem or concern? Why is this problem or concern important?

II. **Stakeholders** – Whose interests are at stake? Who needs to be involved to address the situation?

   *Success depends on identifying a) your own major interests and b) those of other stakeholders who will be most affected.*

III. **Rules/regulations/policies/procedures/common practices and norms.** Which of these may help or hinder attempts at resolution?

IV. **Resources** – What resources (e.g., staff, funding) are available to help address the situation?

V. **Responsible Options** – Brainstorm options. Reality test the pros and cons of each option.

   *Success may depend on your brainstorming widely enough. If all alternatives seem inadequate, can you continue to search?*

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