

Fishbone (Cause & Effect)

Work live on a physical or virtual whiteboard. Record on this sheet only if needed. Capture final highlights on the A3.

Tie to OPS method

Fishbone supports things like Problem Breakdown or if you are doing a 5 Why RCA and are having trouble finding a root cause. You can step back and do a Fishbone to ensure the problem is broken down and then proceed again to Point of Cause and then 5 Why for a more focused experience.

How to use

- 1) Write the GAP-based problem in the head box (right).
- 2) Choose six categories and label each branch box.

Method (Process / How work is done)

What it covers: the steps, sequence, handoffs, approvals, standard work, takt/cycle expectations or the standard or lack of standard you actually follow.

Examples: missing/extra steps, unclear work instructions, batching that creates delays, awkward handoffs, approval bottlenecks.

Machine (Technology / Tools & systems)

What it covers: the equipment, devices, software, screens, integrations and anything you use to do or track the work.

Examples: scanner dropouts, slow UI screens, machine downtime, flaky WMS↔ERP interface, misconfigured printers.

Manpower (People / Skills)

What it covers: staffing levels, skills, training, role clarity, availability, attention/fatigue and the human capability to perform the method.

Examples: new-hire ramp time, cross-training gaps, unclear responsibilities, overtime fatigue, schedule coverage gaps.

Material (Materials / Inputs)

What it covers: the things consumed or transformed (including information quality) before or during the work.

Examples: wrong labels, missing components, out-of-spec parts, incomplete forms/data, substitution issues.

Measurement (Definitions & data)

What it covers: operational definitions, how/when data is captured, instrumentation, dashboards/boards.

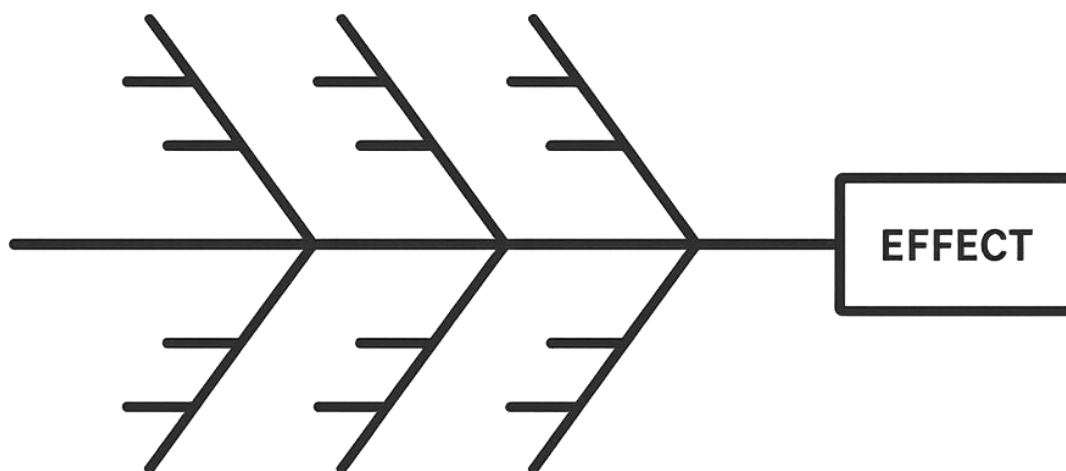
Examples: mismatched KPI definitions, late timestamping, stale dashboards, missing sensors, counting/denominator errors.

Mother Nature (Environment / Place)

What it covers: the physical and situational context—layout, distance, lighting, noise, temperature, weather, access.

Examples: long travel paths, blocked aisles, glare on screens, cold dock doors, outdoor conditions affecting work.

- 3) For each branch, add causes as short notes.
- 4) Mark each note F (Fact) or A (Assumption); add data tasks to validate.
- 5) Choose 1–2 Prioritized Issues and pick the largest, controllable Prioritized Issues. That's your focus as you collect data and find the Point of Cause.



Data Collection: Plan make it measurable.

Data element/KPI	Source & method	Owner	Due Date