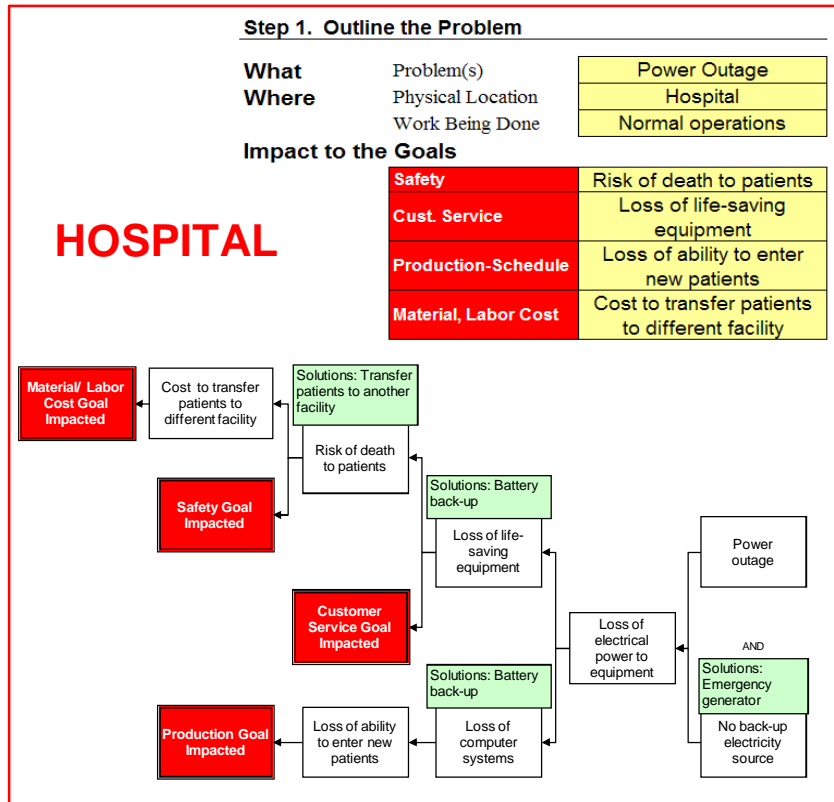


When the Power Goes Out . . .

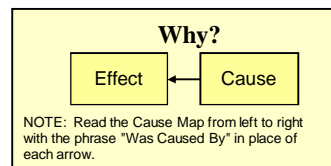
Basing Contingency Plans on the Impacts to your Organization's Goals



Cause Map
Detail Level



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A power outage at a hospital could lead to the deaths of patients. It could also lead to the loss of life-saving equipment. It could cause the facility to not be able to admit new patients, and can result in material and labor costs resulting from the transfer of patients to another facility. Beginning with these impacts to the goals, we can create a Cause Map. All the impacts to the goals lead back to a loss of electrical power, caused by both a power outage AND a lack of back-up electricity source.

When determining solutions, there are a few that come to mind, including transferring patients to another healthcare facility (which becomes an impact to the goals) and installing battery backups in equipment. However, because of the severe impacts to the goals, a hospital will likely decide that the whole problem can be solved by installing an emergency generator. Problem solved. However, installing an emergency generator always the right contingency plan for a power outage?

A power outage at an office building could cause some employees to get injured as they're exiting the building and will result in the loss of the business function of the office. It also may result in paying employees for a non-work day, which is an impact to the labor goal.

The Cause Map looks similar to the hospital power outage Cause Map in that all the impacts lead back to a loss of electrical power, caused by a power outage and lack of back-up electricity source. So, we could put in an emergency generator just like the hospital did and have our problem solved. But the effort and capital required to install an emergency generator based on the lesser impacts to the goals is probably not worth it. Instead, some of the less expensive and consuming solutions can be implemented, such as installing emergency lights and setting up remote work stations for employees.

