1960 NYC AIR DISASTER

Cause Map

Two planes collide mid-air

In addition to causes, evidence-gathering can provide lessons learned. Much of the evidence of the investigation of this tragedy came from the "black box". It was the first - though not the last - time significant evidence was used from this source.

"I heard a big noise while we were flying. "
Stephan Baltz, 11, who died of his injuries the next day

Cause Mapping is a Root Cause Analysis method that captures basic cause-and-effect relationships supported with evidence.

CAUSE MAPPING
Problem Solving • Incident Investigation • Root Cause Analysis

Step 1 **Problem** — What's the Problem?
Step 2 **Analysis** — Why did it happen?
Step 3 **Solutions** — What will be done?

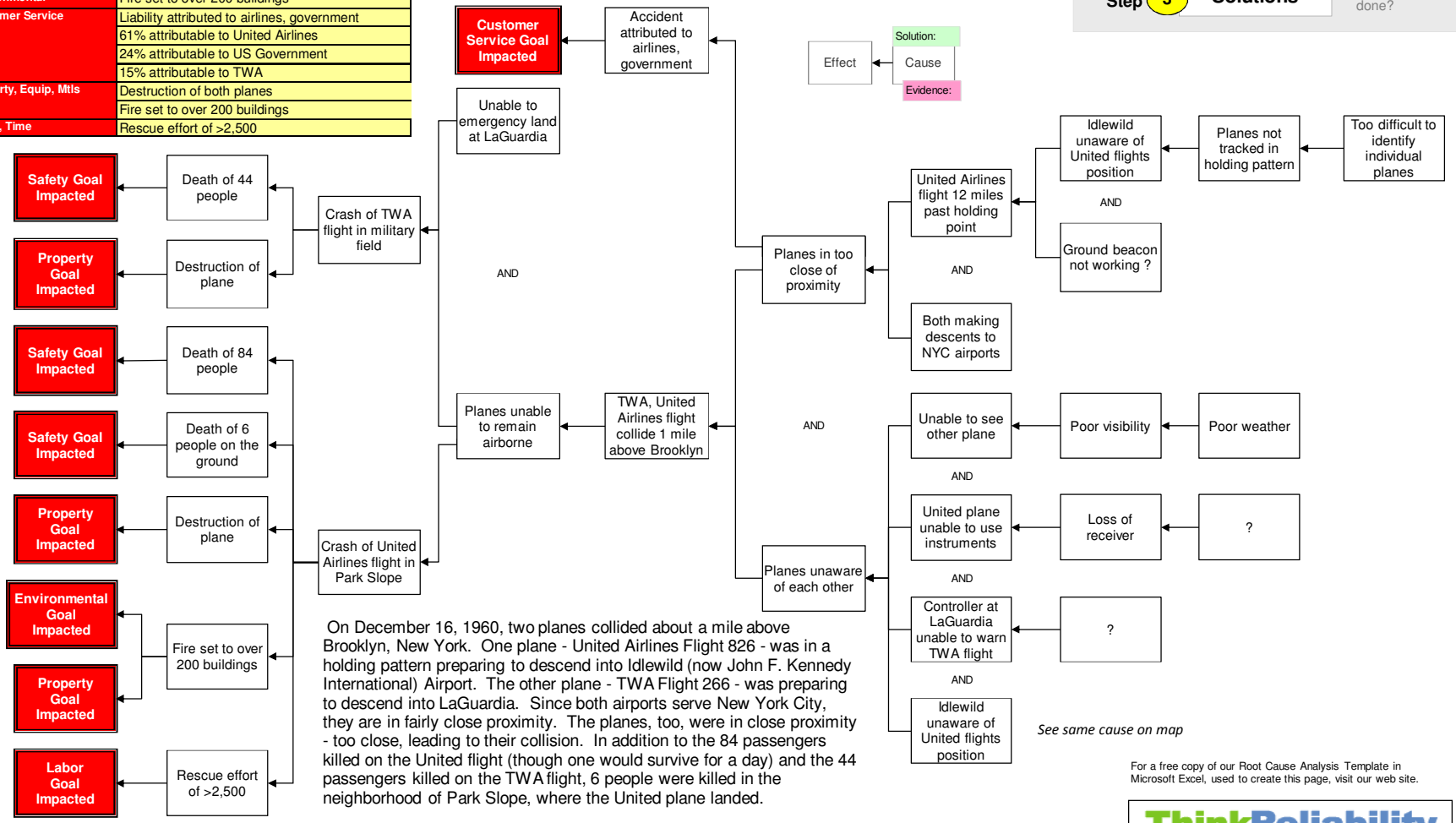
1 Problem

What	Problem(s)	Airplanes collided in mid-air
When	Date	December 16, 1960
	Time	~10:30 a.m.
	Different, unusual, unique	United Airlines plane overshot holding point by 12 miles, poor weather
Where	State, city	New York City
	Facility, site	Idlewild and LaGuardia airports
	Task being performed	Making descents

Impact to the Goals

Safety	134 people killed (44 TWA flight, 84 on United Airlines, 6 on the ground)
Environmental	Fire set to over 200 buildings
Customer Service	Liability attributed to airlines, government
	61% attributable to United Airlines
	24% attributable to US Government
	15% attributable to TWA
Property, Equip, Mtls	Destruction of both planes
	Fire set to over 200 buildings
Labor, Time	Rescue effort of >2,500

2 Analysis



See same cause on map

On December 16, 1960, two planes collided about a mile above Brooklyn, New York. One plane - United Airlines Flight 826 - was in a holding pattern preparing to descend into Idlewild (now John F. Kennedy International) Airport. The other plane - TWA Flight 266 - was preparing to descend into LaGuardia. Since both airports serve New York City, they are in fairly close proximity. The planes, too, were in close proximity - too close, leading to their collision. In addition to the 84 passengers killed on the United flight (though one would survive for a day) and the 44 passengers killed on the TWA flight, 6 people were killed in the neighborhood of Park Slope, where the United plane landed.

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