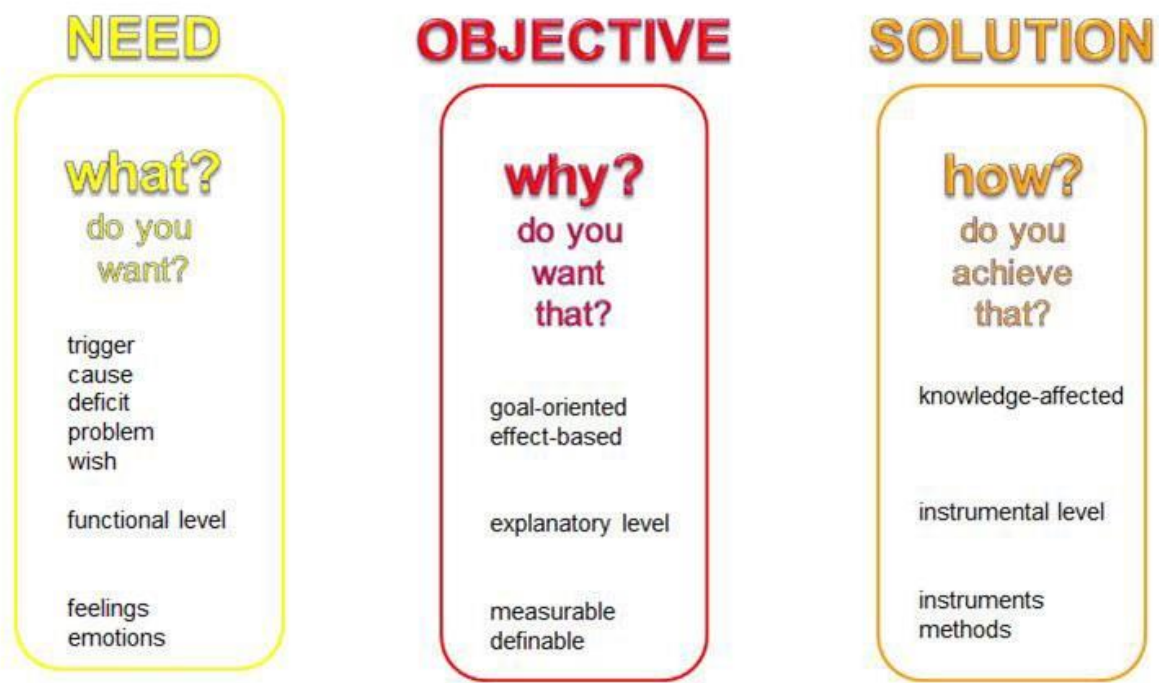


SFM – Solution Finder Model



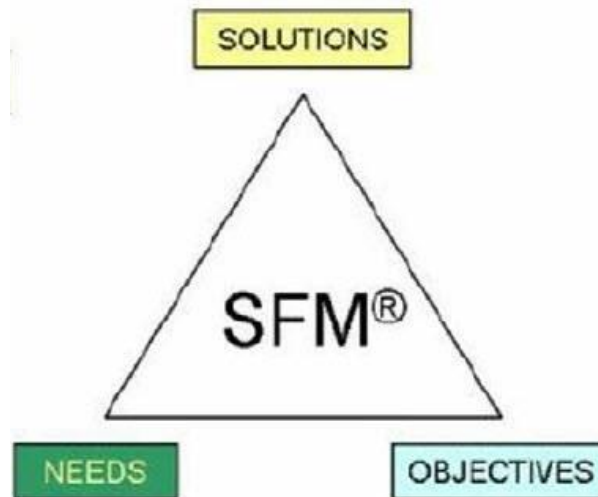
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1. WHAT:

SFM is a model of a *conceptual structure* which allows thoughts and ideas to be ordered in a specific, peculiar way; it is also a method for making such structures (ordered thoughts).

- **SFM principles:** according to the principles of SFM the structure is constituted by three elements “need”, “objective” and “solution” and their relations.
- Element “**Need**”: is the answer to the question “**what** do you want to have, be able to do, remove, ...?”, something you are longing for; for example something missing (knowledge), being able to do something, to correct a defect, wishes, new interests, hopes, concerns, more specific than “objectives”.

- Element “**Objective**”: is the answer to the question “**why** do you want to have, be able to do, remove, ... that (see “need”)?” or “what effect should be achieved in order to satisfy the need?” or “were do I want to go?”. This is more general than the need, it is an explanatory level (rationale) and can have more than one solution.
- Element “**Solution**”: is the answer to the question “**how**, by which measures (means) can the objective (end) be attained?”
In this step, we move from the explanatory level of the objective to an instrumental level.



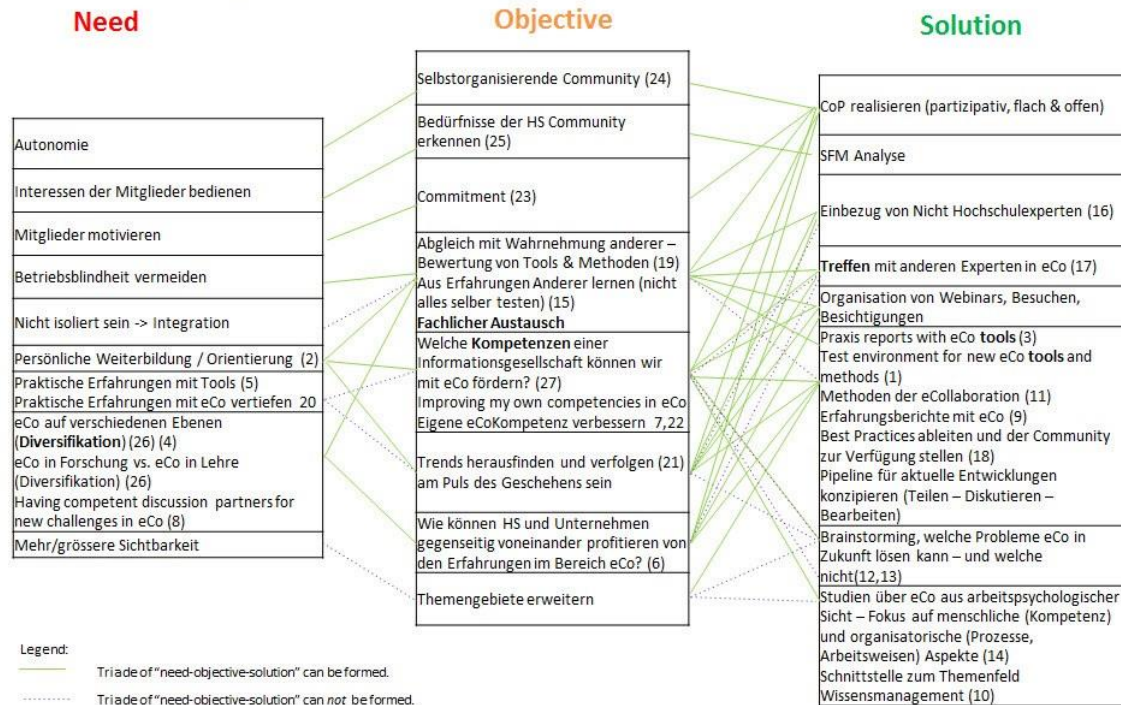
2. WHY:

When knowledge

intensive problems or tasks have to be solved collaboratively by a multidisciplinary group, then generating a shared solution in short time and with a good quality can be a big challenge. This is where the SFM method comes in with its value proposition: its procedure is simple (lightweight), it can be executed in a short space of time (quick), it is designed to guarantee a high quality of the solution (clean) and it allows and promotes multidisciplinary collaboration in groups of any size.

Need Analysis with SFM*

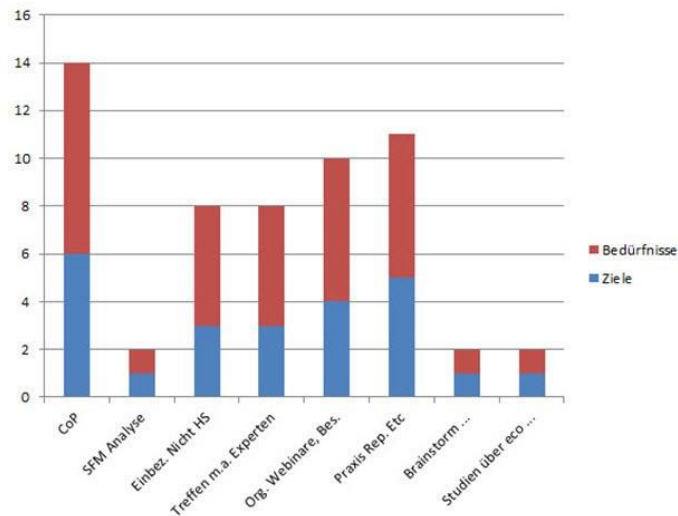
*The analysis is based on the wishes, needs and expectations of the SIG members from the [padlet wall](#) (May 2015). Those statements were structured with the Solution Finder Model (SFM) method to identify those solutions which are sustainable regarding their intertwined needs and objectives. The figures next to the statements below refer to the original statements on padlet. Further, a [webinar](#) with more detailed information about the applied method can be found on SwitchTube.



3. WHO:

SFM can be used by small, medium or large multidisciplinary groups, in SME or larger companies as well as in academia (teaching, research).

The SFM-Analysis as Graph



Tab. 1: Solutions weighted by the number of related objectives and solutions. Multiple counting of needs are possible.

4. HOW:

The procedure for creating SFM triads is as follows:

- CODING: each idea or thought within the scope of the SFM analysis must be assigned to one of the 3 SFM categories (elements): need, objective or solution.
- ORDERING: the coded statements are ordered into clusters of items with the same code.

CONNECTING: the statements are connected to form triads each composed of a need, an objective and a solution; beginning with one element the other two are searched for within their respective cluster.