

Software Problem Solving Cheat Sheet

v0.1 Florian Roth, June 2018

Inspection Points			
1	Error Message	Does the error point you to a config / setting to solve the problem?	
		Does a Google search of the error message provide a solution? (known issue)	Copy the exact message, enclose in " and check the first 10 results
2	Restart	Does a program / service / system restart solve the problem?	Close program, kill program via task manager, restart service, reboot system
3	Log	Does the service / system log contain more and useful information?	Windows Eventlog, or logs in /var/log
4	Rights	Could the problem be caused by access rights problems?	Permissions of program and data that the program needs access to, check your own rights
5	Network	Could the problem be caused by connection problems?	Internet connection, dns resolution, firewall config, connection tests via command line (e.g. with ncat), dump network traffic
6	Path	Is the right interpreter / runtime environment installed?	Program versions (python, java, VC++), Environment variables (PATH, CLASSPATH, GOPATH etc.)
7	Trial & Error	Does a reduced setup solve the problem?	Minimal configuration, remove ballast, reduce complexity
8	Replace	Does changing the browser, system, hardware, environment help?	Different browser, virtual machine, network (VPN), cable
9	Security Function	Does a security program interfere with the execution?	Deactivate Antivirus, SELinux, local Firewall, AppLocker, Proxy Filter
10	Reinstall	Does a remove & reinstall of the software solve the problem?	Backup config (often the config remains on the system)

General Advice		
A.	How does ... ?	Before asking a colleague or superior on how to follow an inspection point, try a Google search. Include all necessary keywords which is the operating system, the service or program and the operation, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none">"debian apache restart""check windows application log""redhat capture network traffic""linux check access rights .ssh folder"
B.	Include all information	If the problem can't be solved, compose a problem report that contains all necessary information including: the setup, version numbers, the exact error message, your tests and the results (attach big files or listings as attachments and not inline)