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## /foreword

**What is a solution worth if it does not solve the problem? As a developer of advanced products and systems, people ask us to come up with solutions. In order to develop a smart solution that works well, it is essential to know and understand how the problem has been defined and what the technical limiting conditions are. We therefore make discussing these issues with the customer a priority.**

## >>addicted to a solution

Unfortunately, we still regularly get project enquiries where a solution has already been chosen, even though the definition of the business problem behind the solution is not clear to us. That may be because there are company secrets that need to be kept, but time pressures or lack of clarity about the problem definition on the part of the customer may also be the cause.

Different interests or requirements generally lie behind the chosen solution. These may even conflict with each other or not be technically achievable. Solutions based on conflicting or unrealisable requirements can end up being too expensive or even cause projects to fail entirely. Being addicted to finding quick solutions to problems means solutions are often selected in haste. Those solutions then turn out not to actually be solutions, but instead create new and possibly greater problems.

So where necessary, we deliberately take some distance from the solution put forward and remain curious about the definition of the problem to be solved. For us and our customers, creating the optimum solution is an exciting voyage of discovery. By getting to grips with the question 'what needs to be solved', we are able to contribute our expertise and creativity and so optimise the success of projects for our customers. The article 'problem identification comes before the solution' on page 12 of this edition of Objective examines this issue in greater depth.

**Happy reading!**