

**Definition (Rubric).** *A rubric is an authoritative rule of conduct or procedure.*

## The Problem Solving Rubric

Stuck!, Aha!,  
Check and Reflect.

Some problem solvers find this *rubric* provides a useful framework for solving problems.

# Stuck!

When you realize you're stuck, write down STUCK!

This acknowledgment may help get past a psychological barrier. It may help to write down the reason or reasons why you're stuck. Perhaps there's something you do not understand or some important fact you don't know.

# Response to Being Stuck!

Return to the *Entry Phase*.

Ask yourself:

- What do I know?
- What do I want?
- What can I introduce?
- What don't I know?

# Aha!

When you come up with an idea, write down Aha! You'll be in the *Attack Phase* and can try all the techniques used in that phase, including conjecturing, simplifying, specializing, generalizing.

# Check

When you believe you have a solution, it's time to go back and check your calculations and your reasoning and to make sure that you have actually solved the original problem.

This is part of the *Review Phase*.

# Reflect

When you believe you're done, take time to reflect on what you did. This effort can lead to dividends when you are working on other problems, as it helps impress in your mind those techniques that were effective.

Think about the key ideas you used, what you did when you were *stuck* and what you did to *stir things up* and come up with your solution.

This is also part of the *Review Phase*.