Italian Hall Disaster of 1913

We all know that falsely yelling "fire" in a crowded place is not protected under the first amendment, the right to free speech. The case that made this determination was tried in the US Supreme Court in 1919.

Six years earlier 73 people, mostly children, lost there lives trying to escape a Christmas party when someone did just that, yelled "fire!." Over 400 miners and families were attending a party on Christmas Eve when the event happened.

We can use the three steps of Cause Mapping to take a closer look at this incident and what can be done to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

Step 1. Problem

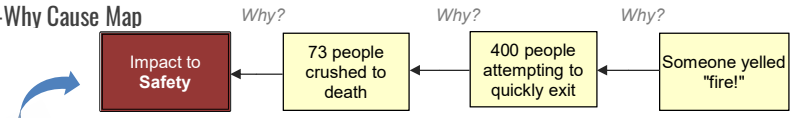
What	Problem(s)	73 Fatalities
When	Date	December 24, 1913
	Time	Night time
	Different, unusual, unique	None noted
Where	Facility, site	Calumet, Michigan
	Unit, area, equipment	Italian Hall
	Task being performed	~400 miners & families attending a Christmas party

Impact to each GOAL

Safety	73 people crushed to death
Environment	None
Customer	None
Production, Schedule	None
Property, Equipment	None
Labor, Time	None

Step 2. Analysis

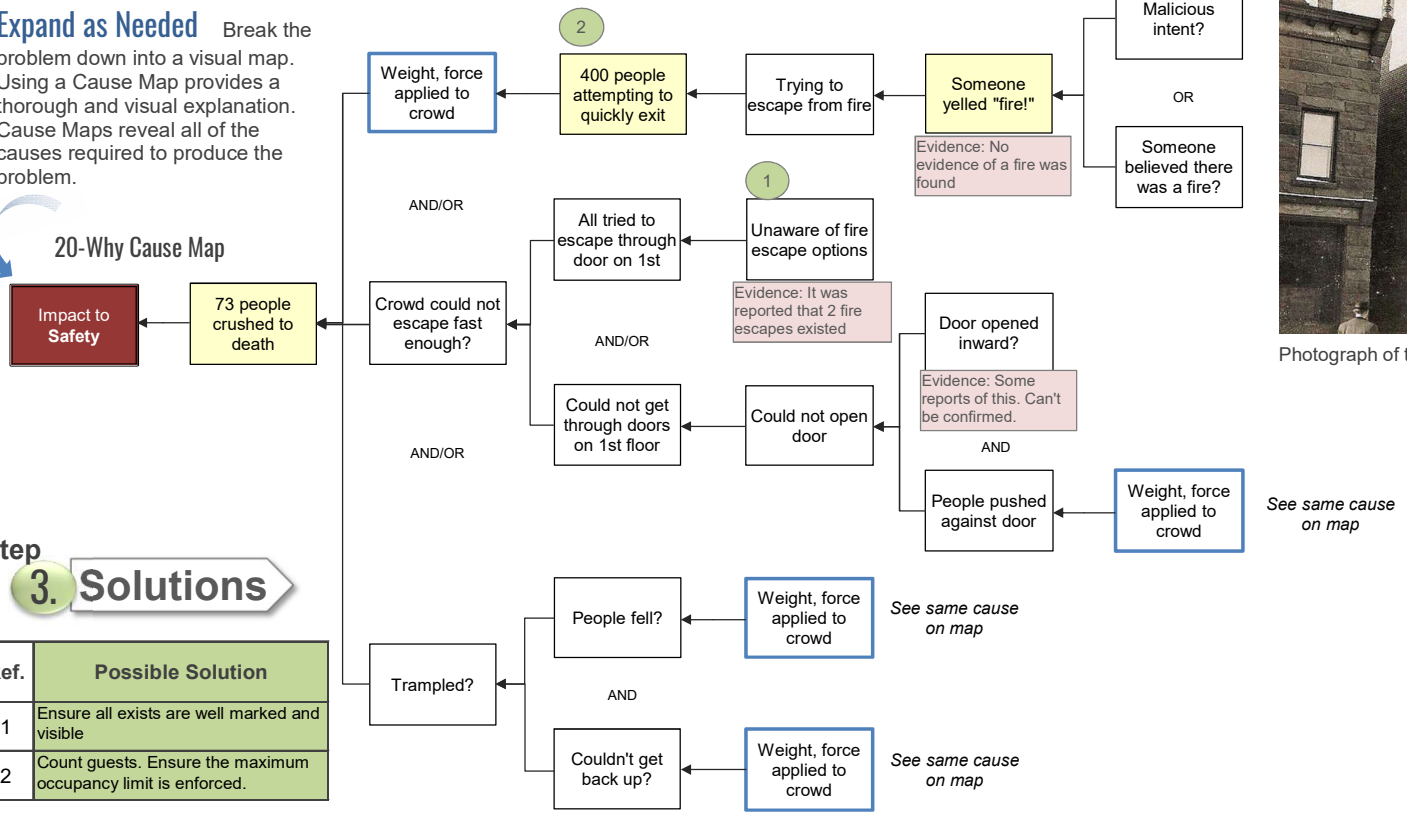
3-Why Cause Map



Start Simple Start with one goal that was impacted and ask why that goal was impacted. Investigating a problem begins with the problem and then backs into the causes by asking Why questions.

Expand as Needed Break the problem down into a visual map. Using a Cause Map provides a thorough and visual explanation. Cause Maps reveal all of the causes required to produce the problem.

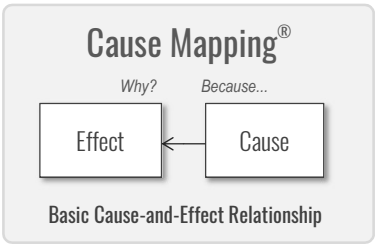
20-Why Cause Map



Step 3. Solutions

Ref.	Possible Solution
1	Ensure all exists are well marked and visible
2	Count guests. Ensure the maximum occupancy limit is enforced.

Photograph of the Italian Hall. The door on the bottom left of the building was the exit.



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