



### **Real Tips for Real Trouble - BBBB (Buy)**

*Troubleshooting: A Technician's Guide* by William Mostia, Jr  
Reviewed by Nick Sands

Troubleshooting sounds like a difficult subject for a book. Bill Mostia tackles the subject in the second edition of *Troubleshooting: A Technician's Guide*. With over 30 years of experience applying instrumentation and control in process facilities, including time with Amoco, Eastman, Dow, Exida, and SIS-Tech, Mostia has a wealth of experience upon which to draw. He is the owner of WLM Engineering, a Professional Engineer, and an active member of ISA, participating on SP18, SP84, and SP91. Mostia has published over 50 articles and contributed to the *Guide to the Automation Body of Knowledge*.

In the introductory chapter Mostia states that troubleshooting is a skill that can be developed, by experience, mentoring, training, and other methods. The next chapters cover factors that influence failure rates and some basics on the types of failures. One chapter is devoted to the general logical approach to troubleshooting; a seven step process of defining the problem, collecting information, analysis, checking if more information is needed, proposing a solution, testing the solution, and completing the repair. Another chapter provides other troubleshooting methods, such as divide and conquer, remove and conquer and add and conquer. It is interesting to read about these methods.

A constant theme through the book, reflecting real experience, is Mostia's emphasis on safety. A complete chapter is dedicated to working safely, from common causes of incidents to conditions in classified areas, to permits. The next chapter provides an explanation of common troubleshooting tools and their uses. The final chapters give example scenarios, tips for troubleshooting, and some documentation that can aid in troubleshooting.

Mostia does an admirable job with what could be a vague subject. As he states in the beginning, troubleshooting is a skill that can be developed. Reading his book is a good step in that development. The combination of troubleshooting methods, overview of tools, safety reminders, and practical tips makes this a book a good buy (BBBB) for even an experienced person. *Troubleshooting: A Technician's Guide* is available at [ISA.org](http://ISA.org) for \$59 (member price).