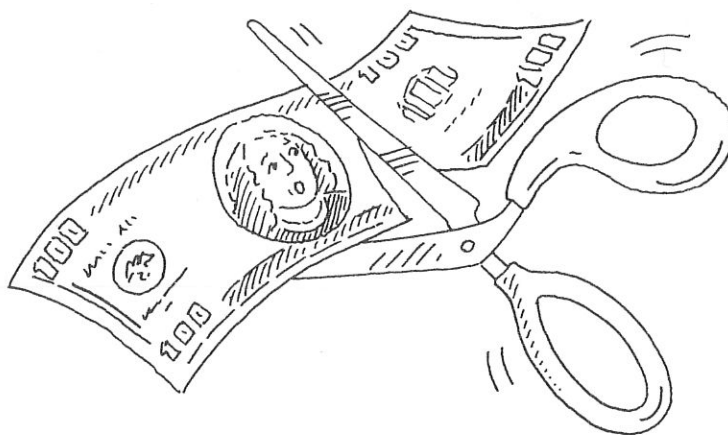# A Case of Too Little Information

Will, Emma, and I have also talked about the problems that arise when a client leaves out information. That happens a lot, unfortunately. Take, for example, a case Will had recently.

It was 9:30 in the evening, and Will was taking a last look at his e-mail messages. There was one from Ralph, one of his grandfather's oldest and dearest friends. Will was surprised. He hadn't even known that old Ralph had a computer. The message had its share of friendly chatter, but it also contained a problem that had Ralph good and stumped.

Ralph, it seems, was in a charitable mood and wanted to give a gift of money to each of his grandkids. He had decided to split $100 among them. His idea was to give each grandchild $5 more than the next younger grandchild. His question for Will was, "How much do I give to my youngest grandchild?"

It was late, and Will was a little tired. The first thing he thought was, *How can I get my grandfather to think more like Ralph here?* Then, without thinking, Will began to jot down some computations. He figured that he could solve this little puzzle easily by writing and solving an equation. Simple. Will wrote the following: *x* = the amount of money the youngest lucky grandchild would get. Then he stopped. He put down his No. 2 pencil and sighed. Before he could go any further, he had a question that Ralph had to answer.

> What information did Will need before he could solve the gift-giving problem?

? 8 ? 2 ? 4 ? 9 ? 6 ? 3 ? 1 ? 5 ? 1

Investigator's Log

Name of case _____

Restate the problem in your own words: _____

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_____

_____

_____

What information do you have? _____

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What information do you need? _____

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What can you do to solve the problem? _____

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Solution: _____

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How do you know your solution makes sense? _____

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