

PDSA Overview for Quality Champion Initiatives

The "Plan-Do-Study-Act" (PDSA) cycle is an iterative four-step model for continuous quality improvement and testing changes. This cycle is used to solve problems, improve processes, and drive innovation in a structured, scientific way.

The PDSA Cycle explained

- **Plan:** Identify an opportunity or problem and plan a change to test.
- **Do:** Carry out the test of the change on a small scale.
- **Study:** Analyze the results of the test to see what was learned and what happened.
- **Act:** Based on the study phase, either adjust the plan and run another cycle or, if successful, implement the change on a larger scale and begin the cycle again to find new improvements.



Benefits of using PDSA

- **Structured approach:**
Provides a clear, step-by-step process for making changes and improvements.
- **Reduces risk:**
Allows for testing changes on a small scale before committing to a full implementation, which helps avoid costly mistakes.
- **Encourages continuous improvement:**
The iterative nature of the cycle means that improvement is an ongoing process, not a one-time event.
- **Data-driven:**
The "Study" phase emphasizes analyzing results to make informed decisions about what to do next.

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Additional References & Materials:

PDSA Resources

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality:

Plan-Do-Study-Act Worksheet, Directions, and Examples

<https://www.ahrq.gov/health-literacy/improve/precautions/tool2b.html>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services:

PDSC Cycle Template

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/qapi/downloads/pdsacyclededebits.pdf>

Institute for Healthcare Improvement:

Model for Improvement: Testing Changes

<https://www.ihl.org/library/model-for-improvement/testing-changes>

A simple internet search can provide you with everything you need to know about this popular method!

