

Home Clinic Toolkit: PDSA Cycle (Model for Improvement)

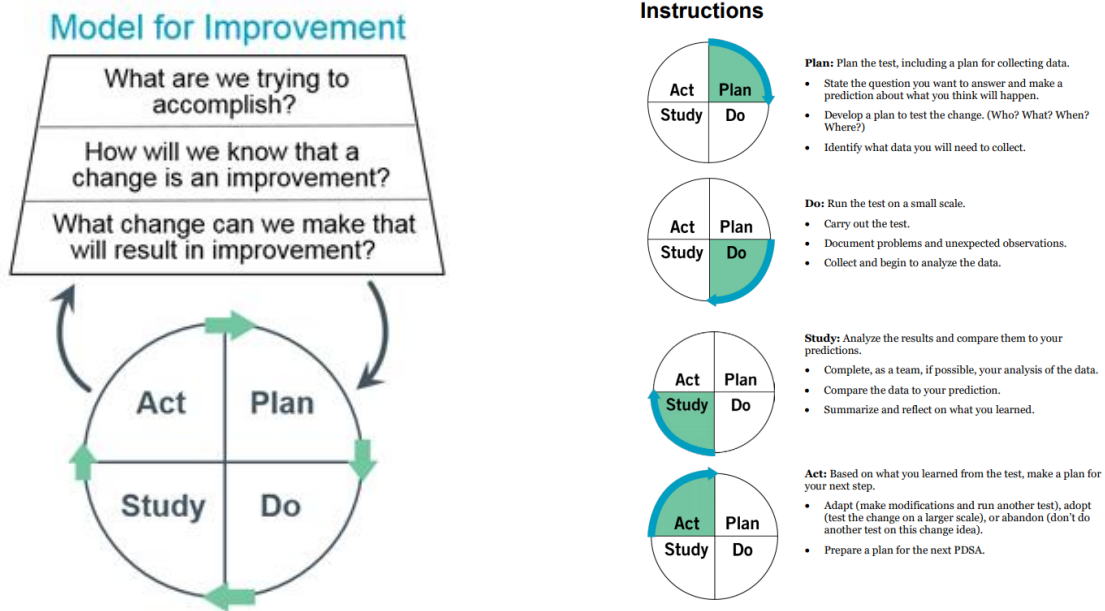
The PDSA cycle is part of the Model for Improvement and:

- Provides a framework for rapidly testing change ideas on a small scale
- Supports the generation of an aim statement or goal to guide the improvement cycle
- Focuses on one change idea to be tested but is composed of multiple PDSA cycles that evolve off the results of the previous PDSA cycle to support reaching the goal

The letters in PDSA are defined as follows with additional context and examples in Figure 1:

- **P**lan: State objectives of the cycle, make predictions, consider who, what, when, where and why and develop a plan to carry out the test
- **D**o: Carry out the test, document problems and observations, begin analysis
- **S**tudy: Complete analysis of the data, compare data to the predictions, summarize what was learned
- **A**ct: What changes are to be made to the plan/do, what will be the next cycle?

FIGURE 1: PDSA CYCLE AND THE MODEL FOR IMPROVEMENT



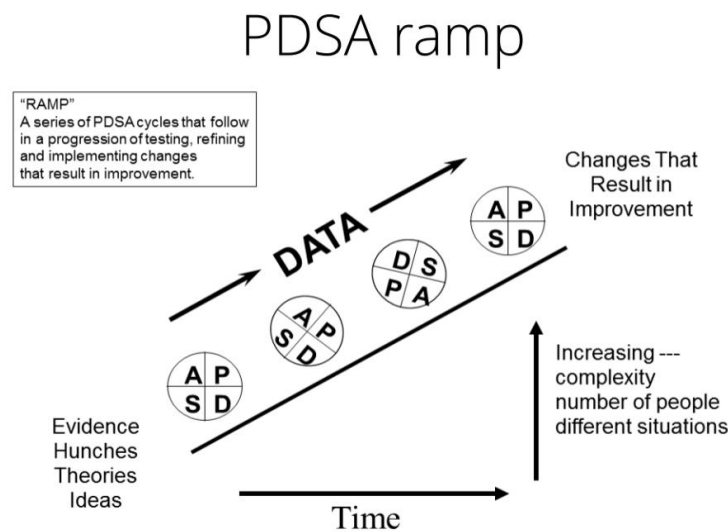
<http://www.ihi.org/resources/Pages/HowtoImprove/ScienceofImprovementTestingChanges.aspx>

PDSA Tips:

- Scale down the size of the initial test (think BIG and test small)
- Plan multiple cycles to test and adapt change
- Think a couple of cycles ahead
- Collect useful data during each test; analyze and adjust plan according to data review
- Incorporate hunches, theories, and ideas into testing; keep the ideas with greatest impact; discard the ideas with negative or no impact

- Do not try to get buy-in or consensus for the test – just start and adjust over time
- Complete multiple rounds of PDSA cycles to reach your goal (Figure 2: PDSA Ramp)
- One ramp of PDSA cycles should be completed per change idea
- Start with a very small test of the change, follow-up with another cycle using successful parts of the plan or new ideas as required until you find the best fit
- Once you see success towards your aim statement, complete a wider-scale test of the change and then use the lessons learned to broadly implement the change
- Multiple ramps can be completed at the same time in parallel where indicated

FIGURE 2: PDSA RAMP



Modified from: <http://www.hqontario.ca/portals/0/documents/qi/rf-document-pdsa-cycles-en.pdf>

Avoid:

- Making the test of change too big or too quick; this can lead to early failure
- Not collecting enough data to know if a change occurred; this makes it hard to know if you've made any change
- Not planning and recording the PDSA cycle; this makes it hard to identify what worked and what did not
- Not reviewing the plan and cycles with your team; this makes it hard to track, build trust and engage the team in change
- Not making a prediction on the PDSA cycle outcome; this helps you modify your test over time

Additional resources:

Institute for Healthcare Improvement Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)

- [Worksheet - Short version](#)

Health Quality Ontario

- [PDSA Worksheet/Instructions](#)