

Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle

The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle is a commonly used tool in healthcare to help guide quality initiatives and drive continuous improvement. The cycle involves four steps that allow for testing changes and assessing their impact. It is not a one-time event; the cycle is repeated many times. The iterative nature of this tool allows for continuous improvement and helps to create a culture of learning and change.

Why use this tool?

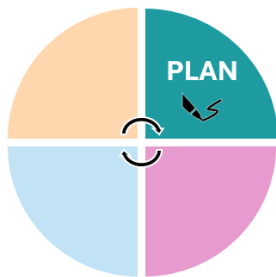
The PDSA cycle allows organizations to break down complex challenges and test changes on a small scale before broader implementation. It provides a logical sequence of steps that guide teams through testing a change, allowing for test-and-learn opportunities. The cycle is data-driven, ensuring that decisions are evidence-informed and not based on assumptions. It encourages collaboration in problem-solving and empowers staff by seeking their input during implementation.

What does this tool look like?



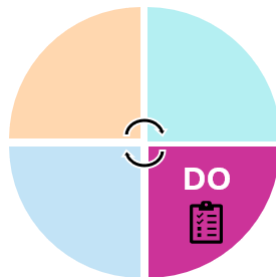
How do I use the PDSA cycle?

Before beginning the first step of the cycle, it is important to determine who will be on the project team. A good project team involves stakeholders with knowledge of the clinical challenge at hand, and who will be involved in implementation. The optimal size of a project team is about five to seven individuals. The team should create a safe and transparent space, that is rooted in accountability and inclusivity.



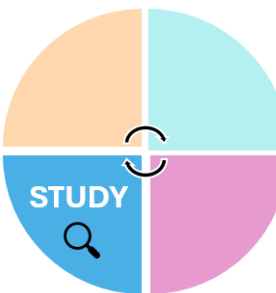
Plan: A plan includes identifying what change will be tested and how.

- Identify a clear objective.
- Develop a plan to test the change. Who? What? Where? When?
- Outline a plan for data collection. Is there baseline data available?
- Make predictions. What do you think will happen?



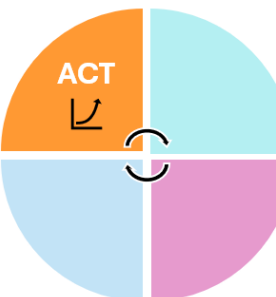
Do: Put the plan into action.

- Run the test on a small scale.
- Document problems and unexpected observations.
- Keep detailed records of what happens.
- Collect the data.



Study: Analyze the data collected.

- Review and analyze the data.
- Compare the results to your predictions.
- Identify and summarize what was learned. What worked well? What didn't?



Act: Based on what you have learned, begin to make plans for the next steps.

- Adapt - make modifications and run another cycle?
- Adopt - implement and test the change on a larger scale?
- Abandon – leave this idea behind?
- This step often involves the decision to begin another PDSA cycle.