THE PROCESS FOR IMPROVEMENT

THE PROCESS FOR IMPROVEMENT

This module describes the improvement process using the Model for Improvement. It also covers what is needed to get going with an improvement project, including initiating a project charter.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, participants will be able to...

- Explain the Model for Improvement and apply it to an improvement project
- Initiate an improvement project and use a project charter

THIS MODULE CONTAINS:

Twenty-two slides with speaking notes and questions for group discussion (45-60 minutes) including:

2 collections of custom content*

- Problem Statements
- Aim Statements

**You may choose the most relevant example from the collection provided, or create your own.*

One optional learning activity:

- Introduction to an Improvement Charter - worksheet (30 minutes)

Remember to make this module your own! Add in examples and details that will bring the ideas to life for the learners.


THE PROCESS
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IMPROVING QUALITY
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By the end of this module, you will be able to...

- Explain the Model for Improvement and apply it to an improvement project
- Initiate an improvement project and use a project charter

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Speaking Notes:

- This module describes the steps we can take to introduce a change and work towards improvement.
- It also introduces a project charter, which is a document that guides the course of a project.

FORMAL IMPROVEMENT METHODS

There are different QI methods and frameworks but they have common features:

- Clear statement about purpose of change
- Testing changes in incremental steps
- Using data to learn about progress
- Using a team – including those who do the work – to develop and test changes

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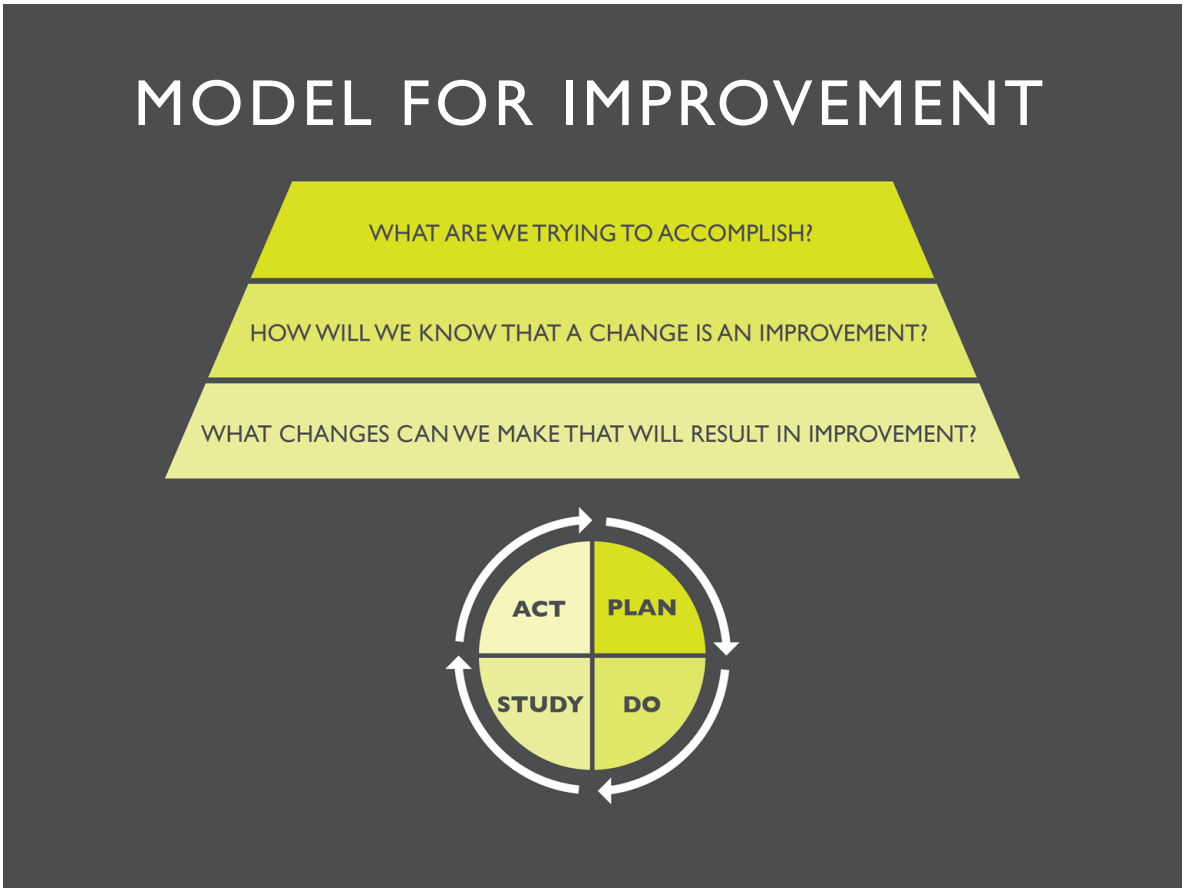
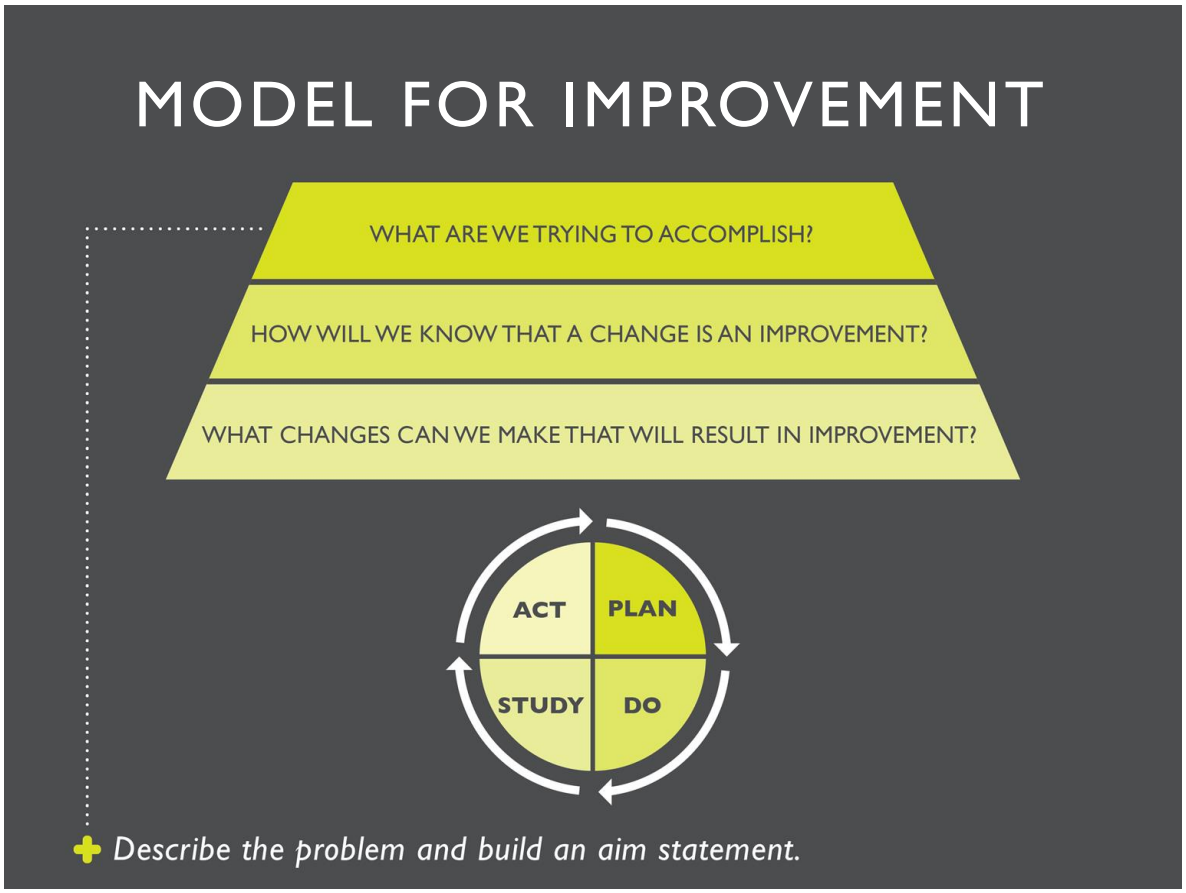
Speaking Notes:

- There are different frameworks such as the Model for Improvement or Lean, but most quality improvement methods will have these same core components.
- They have the same purpose: improvement to processes and outcomes.
- They test changes using small-scale tests to learn about changes and how they can work in a specific context.
- Data is collected and analyzed along the way to understand the problem and understand progress.
- Projects are not done by only one person or one department, they use a team approach.



Speaking Notes:

- This is the Model for Improvement. It is simple and intuitive.
- The model has three questions:
  - What are we trying to accomplish?
  - How will we know a change is an improvement?
  - What changes can we make that will result in an improvement?
- The Model for Improvement is a structured approach, based on the scientific method, and it helps you learn how to improve through repeated testing.



Speaking Notes:

- The first question in the Model for Improvement is "what are we trying to accomplish?"
- It is about defining the purpose of the project and, more specifically, defining what improvement you want to achieve.
- The answer to this question becomes the aim statement.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

Problem Statement & Aim Statement

Outlines the general problem and purpose of your project.

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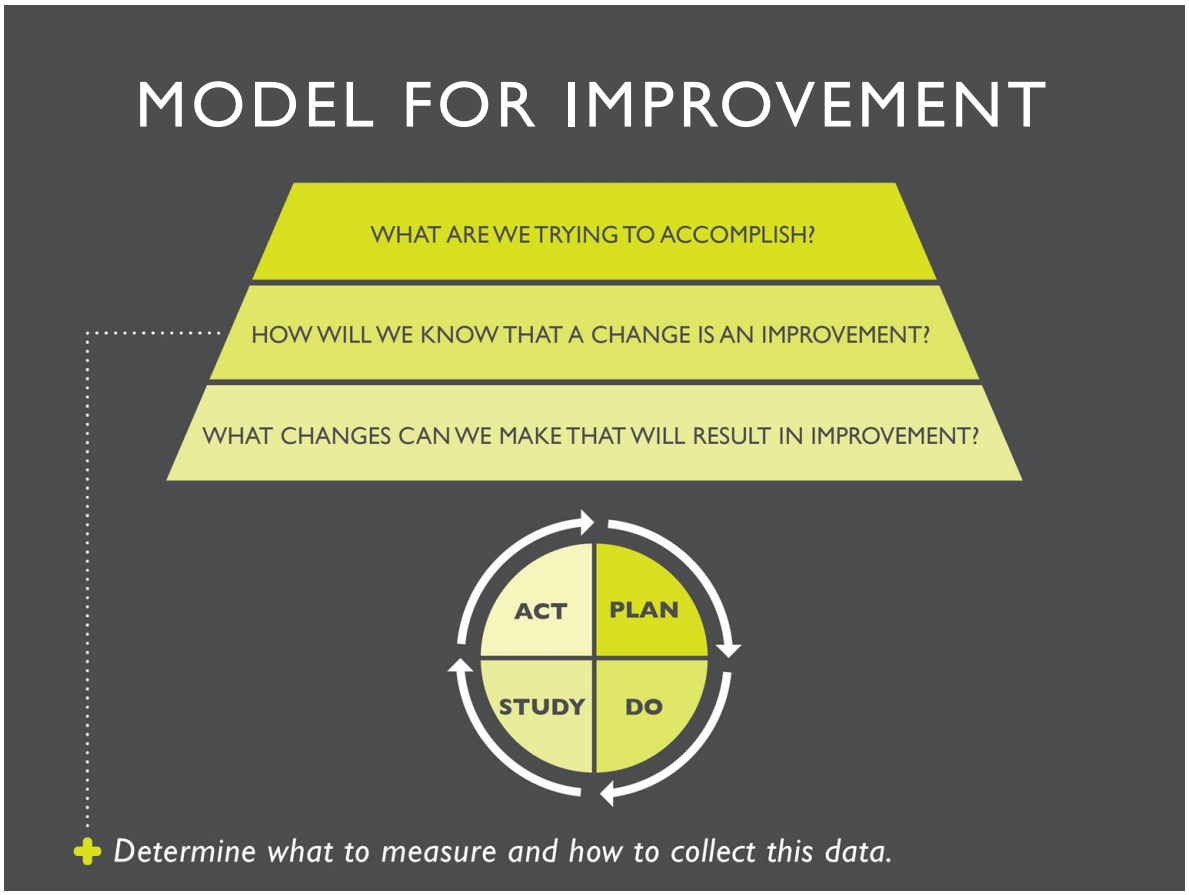
Speaking Notes:

- It can be tempting to jump to solutions, but try to think about the reasons for the problem (the why), and what success will look like before jumping into solutions and details (the how).
- A problem statement helps you focus on what the underlying issues are.
- An aim statement helps you determine what you really want to achieve and what to focus your improvement efforts on.



Speaking Notes:

- The second question in the Model for Improvement is "how will we know a change is an improvement?"
- This is where you specify what you will measure, and what data you need to measure it, in order to know whether or not you have actually made an improvement.

HOW WILL WE KNOW A CHANGE IS AN IMPROVEMENT?

Measures

Not all changes are going to lead to improvement. You need data to inform the team whether the changes are working.

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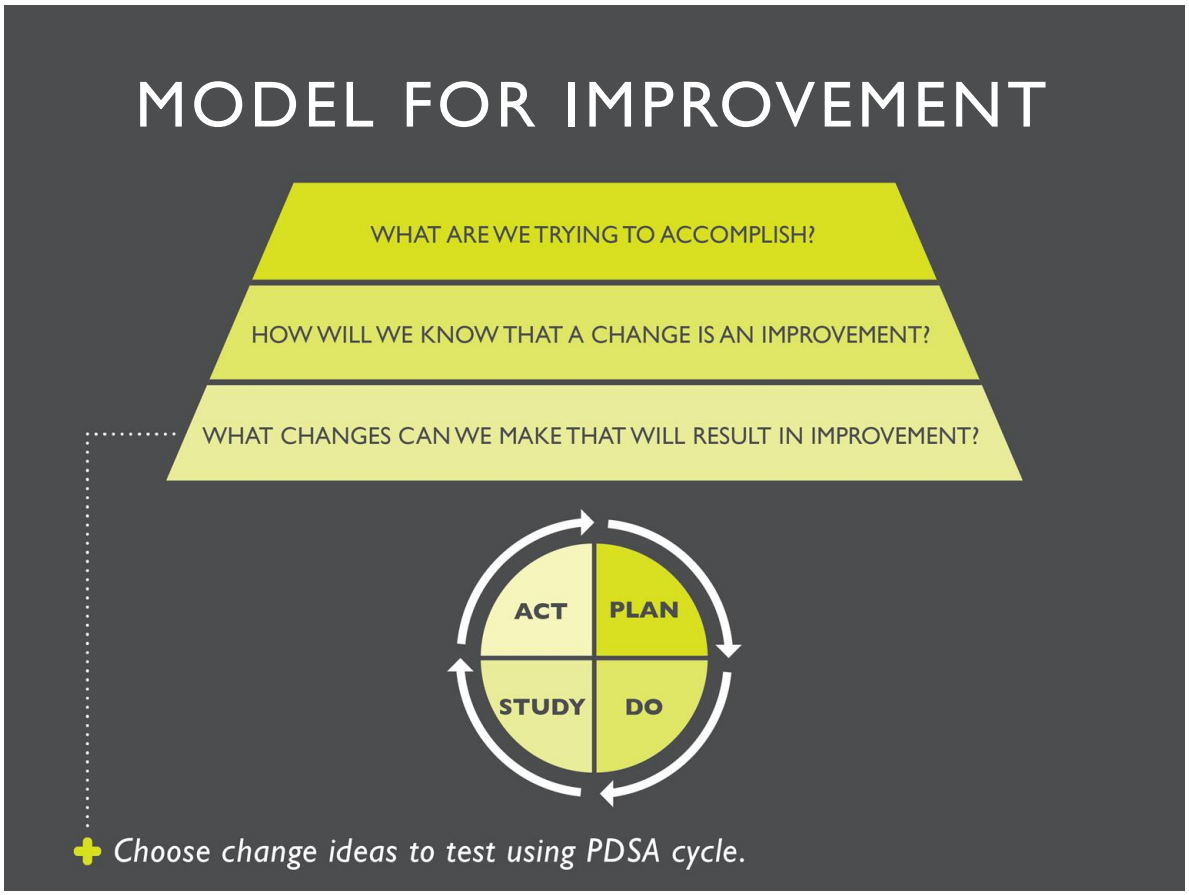
Speaking Notes:

- Measures should be based on achieving your aim.
- Your measures monitor whether the changes you make are actually improving things or not and will help you gauge how close you are to achieving what you set out to accomplish.
- You will need a few different measures to tell the whole story.
- It is important to establish measures at the beginning of your project, but they may change over the course of your project.

Defining measures and developing a plan for data collection is covered in more detail in the Measuring and Using Data module.



Speaking Notes:

- The third question in the Model for Improvement is "what changes can we make that will result in improvement?"
- This is where you generate ideas for how to make things better.

WHAT CHANGES CAN WE MAKE THAT WILL RESULT IN IMPROVEMENT?

Ideas for change

What are the team's initial ideas for how to achieve the aim?

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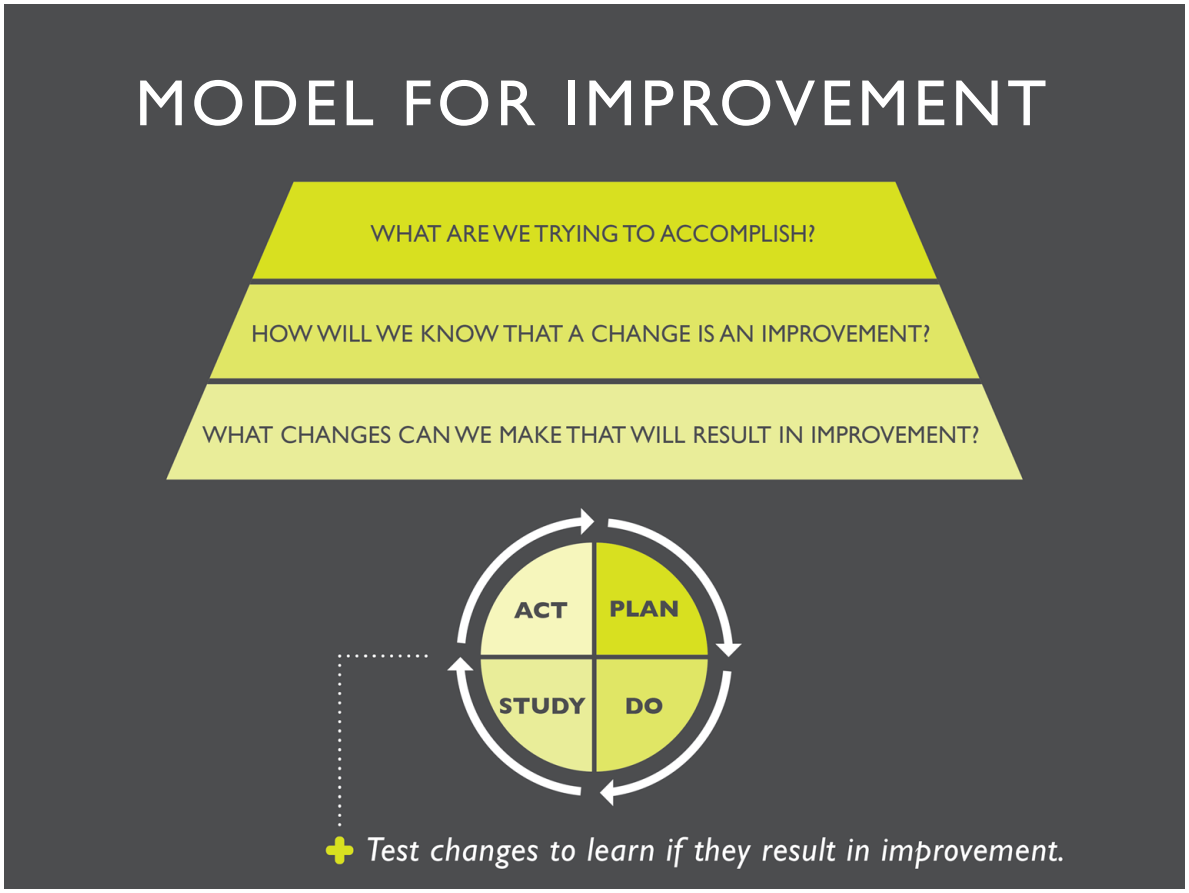
Speaking Notes:

- Think about ideas for change the team may already have in mind.
- Creative thinking can also be helpful in generating new ideas for achieving improvement.
- Often achieving your aim requires multiple ideas for change, and these ideas may change throughout the course of the project.
- It is also helpful to consider any specific requirements or constraints that will influence the changes you can make.

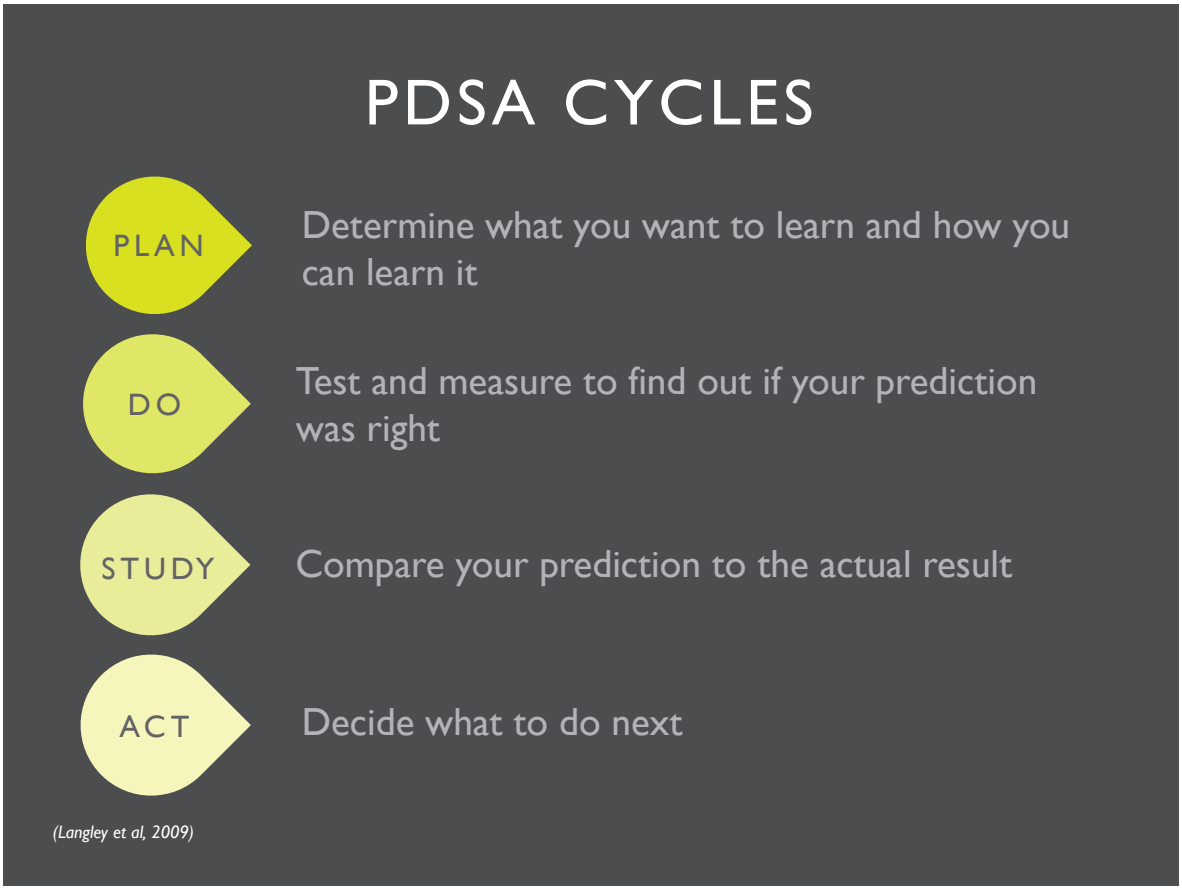
Generating ideas for change is covered in more detail in the From Ideas to Implementation module.



Speaking Notes:

- Ideas will be tested using PDSA cycles: Plan – Do – Study – Act.
- This is about testing your idea in a small way.
- By using a series of testing cycles, you can learn what will be most effective in making improvements before you implement on a full scale.
- Involving others in PDSA cycles to try out the change before it is implemented can help reduce barriers to change.

Testing ideas for change is covered in more detail in the From Ideas to Implementation module.



Speaking Notes:

- PDSA cycles are deceptively simple. It is important to follow all the steps to provide the most value.
- Going through each section before the test helps keep the tests small and ensures no steps are missed.
- In a PDSA cycle, the "planning" stage is different from the overall planning for an improvement project. It is focused on the idea to test and is very quick. Be careful not to get hung up on planning, just try something – it may fail, and you can learn from that for your next PDSA cycle.

The Paper Airplane Competition optional activity in the From Ideas to Implementation module could be used here to reinforce learning on PDSA cycles.

CHARTER

A documented plan to guide the work of the team.

Charters are useful for projects because they:

- Clarify purpose
- Limit the tendency to get off track
- Outline roles of various team members
- Show where to start
- Determine when project is finished

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Speaking Notes:

- A charter outlines all of the elements of the improvement process.
- There are 4 key elements:
  1. Overall Purpose
  2. Expected Outcomes
  3. Initial Ideas for Change
  4. Team Members' Roles and Responsibilities
- A charter should be drafted with your team at the beginning of the project. Spending this time up front will likely save a lot of time later on, but it can also be revised as necessary throughout the project.

There is a template for an improvement charter available in the worksheets section.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

A brief description of the issue or problem that a quality improvement team is seeking to address.

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Speaking Notes:

- The problem statement specifies what is currently not working well and what the effect is on quality. What made you realize that something needs to be improved?
- Before jumping to solutions, your team should be able to describe the problem in terms of quality.
- In defining your problem, consider the dimensions of quality, and describe how care for the patient is not currently meeting one or more of these dimensions.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

"At the *Get Better Health Clinic*, there has been an increase in complaints from clients this year. The majority of these complaints are about waiting for an appointment at the clinic. The clinic manager calculated that the average wait time for an appointment is 135 days."

Speaking Notes:

- Here is an example of a problem statement.

Optional Discussion Question:

What is the problem here in terms of quality?

FOR EXAMPLE…

Problem Statement:

Speaking Notes:

- Here is another example of a problem statement.
  (Copy an example from the next page into this slide, or create your own example.)

Optional Discussion Question:

What dimensions of quality does this example relate to?

If participants are planning to take on an improvement project you may want to take some time to assist them to draft a problem statement for their project.

Custom Examples

Choose an example from the list below, or create your own example, and add it into the Problem Statement slide.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

- **Mountain View Care Centre** is a long term care home with 300 residents. In the last 6 months, the number of falls in the north wing has increased by over 30%.

- The **Coast View Clinic** has been receiving an increased number of complaints about waiting times from patients. A quick survey showed that patients were waiting an average of 55 minutes for an appointment, with the range being 15-100 minutes.

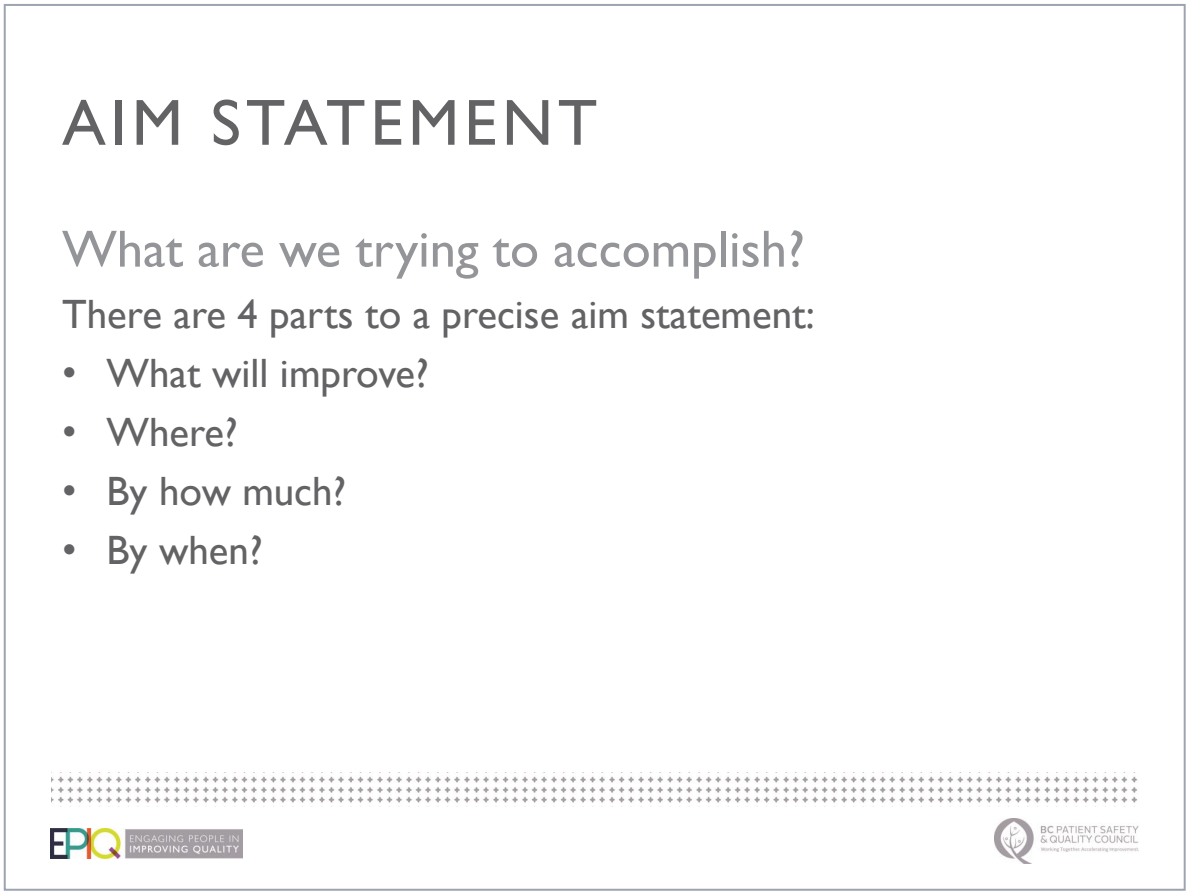
- At **Cedar View Hospital**, the wound care team has shown that in the past 6 months, there has been a 30% increase in pressure ulcers on the 5-South Medical Unit.

- The nursing staff of the **Park View Emergency Department** have expressed some frustration at the recent reorganization of the supply rooms. They report that it is taking them too long to find the supplies they need, and that they often have to go into several different areas to get everything they need for common procedures.

- Provincial data shows that the **Ocean View Hospital** NSQIP surgical site infection rate for colorectal patients is in the 10th percentile.

- In the past few months, staff turnover at the **Valley View Mental Health Centre** has spiked. During exit interviews, a number of people have made reference to code white situations they were involved in. Data from the last year shows there has been a steadily increasing incidence of code white events from 5 per month to 15 per month.

Or create your own:



Speaking Notes:

- After working out exactly what the problem is, the next step is to write out an aim statement.
- The aim statement specifies what will improve, where, by how much, and by when.
- How you are going to achieve your aim is not included in a good aim statement because this can limit all the ways that you can get the job done.
- The target of an aim statement should be ambitious so people are stretched or motivated, but still realistic and achievable.
- A good aim statement can also help avoid "scope creep" because it not only tells us what we are working on, but also helps determine what is not in the scope of the project.

AIM STATEMENT

"The wait time for the *Get Better Health Clinic* will decrease from an average of 135 days to less than 60 days by the end of this year."

- What will improve?
- Where?
- By when?
- By how much?

Speaking Notes:

- An aim statement needs to be specific, and should include a target and a time frame.
- Here is an example.

Optional Discussion Question:

Can you identify the 4 components?

Anticipated Responses:

- What will improve: # of days wait for an appointment
- Where: The Get Better Clinic
- By when: By the end of the year (ie: December 31, 20__)
- By how much: 75 days or more

FOR EXAMPLE…

Aim Statement:

What will improve? Where? By when? By how much?

Speaking Notes:

- Here is an example of an aim statement.
  (Copy an example from the next page into this slide, or create your own example.)
- Can you identify the 4 components?

If participants are planning to take on an improvement project you may want to take some time to assist them to draft an aim statement for their project.

Custom Examples

Choose an example from the list below, or create your own example, and add it into the Aim Statement slide.

AIM STATEMENTS

- We will decrease the number of falls for all residents on **Mountain View Care Centre's** North wing from an average of 10 per month to 2 per month by December 31.

- We will reduce waiting time to see a physician at **Coast View Clinic** to less than 30 minutes by May 31.

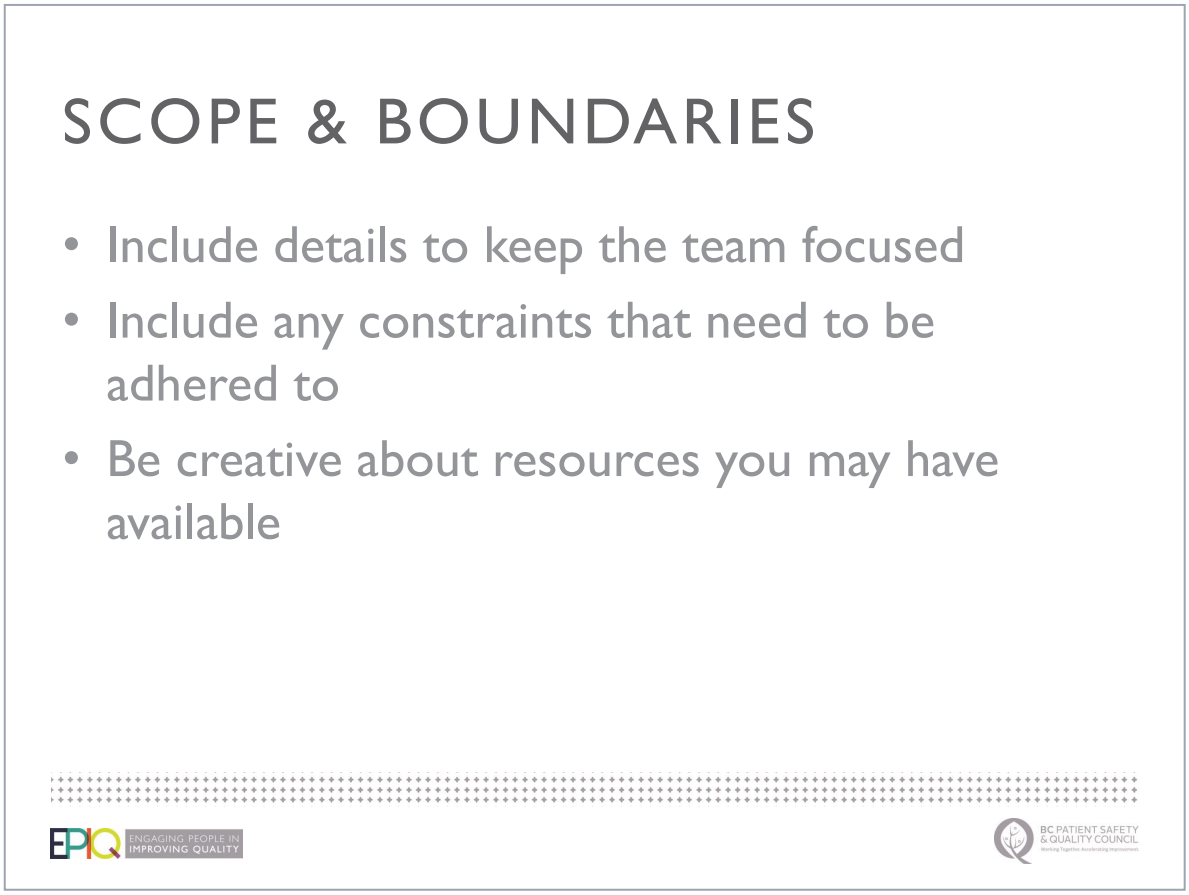
- On 7-West Medical Unit at **Cedar View Hospital**, the number of pressure ulcers per patient day will decrease by 30% by September 30.

- At **Park View Emergency Department**, we will reduce the time that nurses spend searching for supplies by 50% by December 31.

- To increase the appropriate timing of prophylactic antibiotics in colorectal cases in the **Ocean View Hospital** operating room to 95% by June 30.

- By March 31, the Schizophrenia Unit at **Valley View Mental Health Centre** will have reduced the number of violent incidents on the unit from an average of 15 to 5 or fewer per month.

Or create your own:



Speaking Notes:

- The scope and boundaries of the project clarify what the project will do and what it won't do.
- Specifying existing strategies, related projects, patient populations, scale, etc. can help keep the project focused.
- It is important to specify if there are any constraints, such as policies or guidelines that need to be followed.
- Look for additional resources to support this work such as student projects or internships.
- Scope and boundaries can change as a project progresses. Your project team can decide together if the scope needs to change, and then redefine this in the project charter.

If participants are part of a specific project team, take some time for the group to draft the project scope and boundaries for their project.

Optional Activity

INTRODUCTION TO AN IMPROVEMENT CHARTER

Purpose

For project team(s) to initiate a charter to guide their project work.

Time

30 – 60 minutes

Materials

Improvement Charter template 

Preparation

Print a copy of the charter template for each participant.

Instructions

Consider the focus of the work that your team would like to do. As a team, begin to define this work by completing the sections of the charter:

- Project name, sponsor, team leader and members
- Problem Statement - What is the gap in quality this work is addressing?
- Aim Statement - What will improve? By how much? By when? Where?
- Scope and Boundaries - What will the project include?

Note that for the measures, change ideas and PDSA cycles, EPIQ modules Measuring and Using Data and From Ideas to Implementation will help inform these sections.

Participants can also complete other sections of the charter, ie: team, key dates, and plan to include the voice of the client.

Debrief

What was it like working through the charter? Any challenges? How did you navigate these? How will this document help you in achieving improvement?

Notes

- This activity can be used for a large project involving everyone, for small groups, or even a personal improvement project.
- Other project charter templates may be substituted in.
- The process of completing a charter brings awareness to everyone involved and confirms their commitment to participate and support the project. The dialogue in this process is as important as the charter itself.

KEEP IN MIND…

- An aim statement provides a clear understanding of what we are trying to improve
- Collecting data will tell us if the ideas we are testing are making an improvement
- PDSA cycles guide action and provide structure for testing ideas

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Speaking Notes:

- There are different frameworks to guide improvement efforts, such as the Model for Improvement, but most quality improvement methods will have the same core components.
- Having a clear aim, collecting data, and using small scale tests are all important to achieving improvement.

Optional Discussion Questions:

What stood out for you today? What do you want to remember about this session?

TIME TO REFLECT
Can you...

- Explain the Model for Improvement and apply it to an improvement project?
- Initiate an improvement project and use a project charter?

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Speaking Notes:

- Overall, this module is meant to demonstrate how important it is to think about the purpose of an improvement project and to use formal improvement methods. All of these elements should be documented to help keep the work on track.

Use any remaining time for questions and discussion.

Also, be sure to get feedback from your participants on the session. There is an evaluation form that you can use in the appendix.

IMPROVEMENT CHARTER WORKSHEET

PROJECT NAME:

SPONSOR:

TEAM LEADER:

TEAM MEMBERS:

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

Problem Statement: *(What is the gap in quality this work is going to address?)*

Aim Statement: *(What will improve? By how much? By when? Where?)*

Scope and Boundaries: *(What will the project include?)*

HOW WILL WE KNOW A CHANGE IS AN IMPROVEMENT?

	Current Performance	Goal	Plan to collect data for this measure
Outcome Measures			
Process Measures			
Balancing Measures			

WHAT CHANGES CAN WE MAKE THAT WILL RESULT IN IMPROVEMENT?

Change Ideas to Test:

Initial PDSA cycles: *(To learn if...)*

HOW WILL WE MANAGE THE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT?

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEAM MEMBERS:

Name:	Role/Responsibilities:

Key Dates:

Plan to Incorporate Voice of Patient/Client/Resident:

Module References

Langley, Gerald J., et al. *The improvement guide: a practical approach to enhancing organizational performance*. John Wiley & Sons, 2009.