PDCA Problem Solving Revisited
Lean Business Practice

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Booth #
Our Lean services:

Lean Assessment

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#1 Best Seller in the Obara and Wilburn household

TOYOTA by TOYOTA

Reflections from the Inside Leaders on the Techniques that Revolutionized the Industry

Edited by Samuel Obara and Darril Wilburn
So what is PDCA??

PDCA cycle is a cycle of making a plan (Plan), implement it (Do), check the results (Check), and take necessary actions to improve (Action).

So what is PDCA??

• A way of thinking and organizing activity to understand and solve problems.

*The Toyota Production System creates a community of scientists. To make any changes Toyota uses a rigorous problem-solving process… that is, in effect, an experimental test of the proposed changes.*

*HBR Article: Decoding the DNA of the Toyota Production System*
PDCA and A3

- Many times the format used to demonstrate your PDCA activity is called an A3 (11x17 paper).

“Toyota...does not suffer from voluminous paperwork we associate with bureaucracy. In most cases...short crisp reports on one side of size A3 paper...” are used. The result is a clear statement of a problem and solutions that is accessible not only to people within a particular project but also to those working on other projects.”

Another Look at How Toyota Integrates Product Development

Why Revisit?

- Trying to do too much!
- Align with the values.
What is a Problem?

Types of Problems

**“Future” Type of Problem**
- What conditions will our Agency face in 5-10 years? Addressed through Hoshin Kanri process.

**“Event” Type of Problem**
- A gap develops between the accepted standard and the current situation.

**“Setting” Type of Problem**
- Establishing a new and higher ideal situation in order to purposely create a “GAP”.

The Purpose of our Work?

- Product as countermeasure
- Service as countermeasure
- Employee as countermeasure
What’s The Problem with “Problem”?

An opportunity I can say yes or no, a problem I must solve!
Clarify the Problem
Making ambiguous problems clear

What is the ideal situation?
Current Situation
GAP
Ideal Situation

Problem
Visualizing (Making Explicit)

Clear, Specific

Unclear “Junk” Words

• What is a junk word?

• Why are they not good?
Refocus on Problem Breakdown

- Better problem breakdown = more focused Root Cause analysis

Break Down the Problem

Based on facts, break down the problem and clarify objectives

Large / Vague Problem

- Break down
- what? where? when? who?

Specific Problem

- Prioritize the problem to pursue

Point of Cause

POC Before Root Cause
Target Setting

Specific Problem

Are we describing “what to do”? While pursuing mid and long-term targets, establish a series of short-term targets.

Do What?
Too What?
How Much?
By When?

Is it quantitative, detailed and challenging enough?

More Focused Root Cause Analysis

Specific Problem

“WHY?” (Speculate Causes)
Repeatedly ask “WHY?”

Confirm facts, and if there’s no cause-and-result sequence in the cause, stop asking “WHY”.

Root Cause
Countermeasure
Check Results and Process

Standardize

Establish successful processes as precedent, and continue to raise the standard level of success.

Ideal Situation

Repeat PDCA until success is achieved, then standardize.
Key Phases

- Clarify (P)
- Break Down (P)
- A
  - Standardize
- C
  - Check Results And Process
- D
  - Implement Countermeasures
- Plan (P)
- Act (P)
- Do (P)
- Check (P)
- Target Setting (P)
- Root Cause Analysis (P)
- Develop Countermeasures (P)

The End