



Plan-Do-Check-Act, is a cycling, four-step approach to problem-solving that allows you to test various solutions to a problem to identify the most effective solution.

The foundation for this process relies on training, efficient procedures, and customer retention. The cycle can be refined and repeated time and time again and can be used by any department, from quality to accounting to marketing.

## START WITH A PLAN 1

In any project, you will first need a detailed plan. Make sure to identify your goals, delegate work properly and set a clear action plan with key milestones. Don't forget to document your plans in order to help you analyze its effectiveness later.

## ASSIGN TASKS TO DO 2

Once you have your plan, do it! As no plan is ever completely perfect, make sure you make a list of problems as you encounter them, and how you responded to them.

## GO BACK AND CHECK 3

Once you've finished the project, immediately call the team to compile the list of problems and solutions they've encountered. Share the information with the team so that everyone knows and understands how to avoid these problems, or to fix them if they happen to reappear again later.

After that, take an all-encompassing look at the project. There are usually some key areas where you've felt that could improve project efficiency, or where you could have done something better. Brainstorm, and identify areas for improvement. For each problem you found, identify the root causes.

## STANDARDIZE YOUR ACTION 4

You now know the root causes of the problems, fix them! Your job is to ensure these problems don't rear their ugly heads again the next time you carry out a similar project. Solving an issue by fixing the root cause is like uprooting weeds; they don't grow back. If you continually solve problems as they come along, then all you're doing is cutting the weeds. With a bit of time, they'll just come back. Once the root causes are eliminated, it is important to standardize the techniques and actions in order to ensure that everyone knows how to handle a similar issue.