

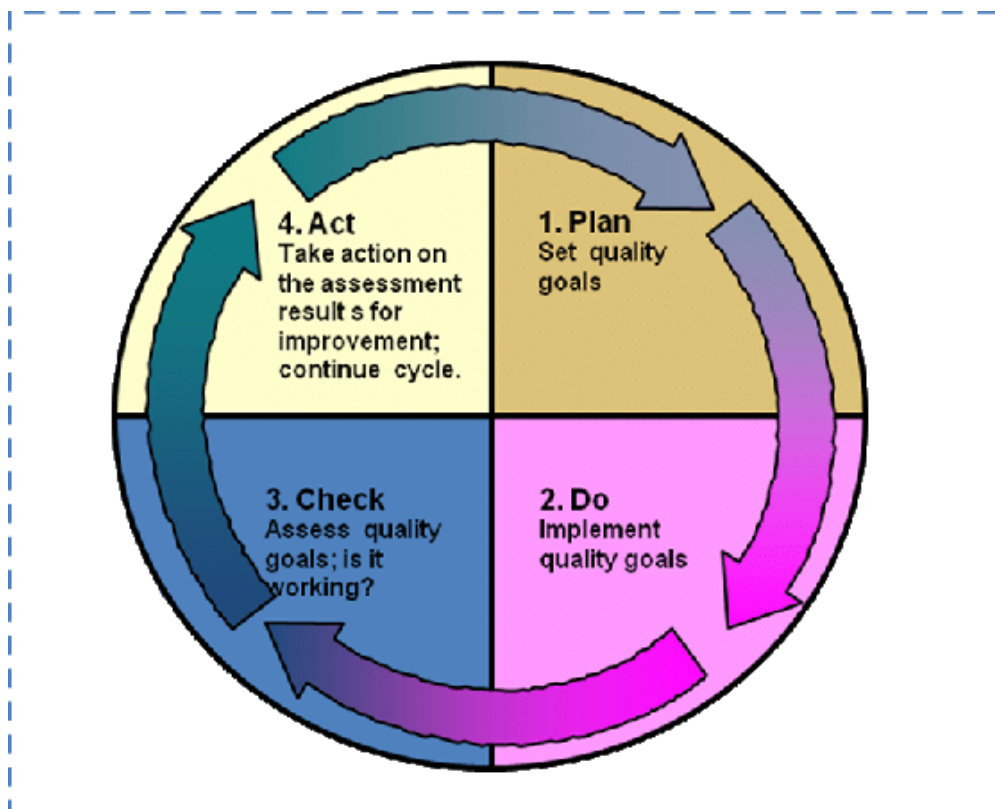
What is the Deming Cycle (or PDCA)?

PDCA is an iterative design and management method used in business for the control and continual improvement of processes and products. It is also known as the Deming circle/cycle/wheel, the Shewhart cycle, the control circle/cycle, or plan–do–study–act.

Another version of this PDCA cycle is OPDCA.

The Deming Cycle (or Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)) is a four-step iterative technique used to solve problems and to improve organizational processes. Dr. Walter A. Shewhart, the renowned physicist and statistician from Western Electric and Bell Labs, developed the original concept during the 1920s. His approach was a three-step linear problem-solving method.

Dr. W. Edwards Deming, the famous quality-control pioneer and author of [Deming's 14 Points](#), popularized the technique in the 1950s and took Shewhart's linear three-step process and revised it to be the iterative four-step circle and cycle we know today. This then became known as the Deming Cycle.



4 stages of Deming cycle

PDCA or the Deming cycle is a management methodology that aims to continually improve processes. This cycle is based on four stages: **plan, do,**

check, and act. To adapt to market changes, improve efficiency, boost productivity, and meet the needs of your customers, having a method is required.

Definition of Deming Cycle, PDCA:

Never-ending improvement is the heart of any continuous improvement effort. The Deming Cycle, or PDCA, is one of the first formalized approaches to utilize an iterative approach to improving processes, and it still serves as a fundamental tool today for continuous improvement.

This article will describe the stages of the Deming Cycle, the benefits of using the PDCA approach to improvement, an example of how it can be applied, and some best practices for successful use of the method for improving your processes.

Why is the Deming Cycle important to understand?

Not only are the Deming Cycle and PDCA important to understand, they are also important to implement and deploy in an organization.

1. Organizations and leaders must understand that all processes can be improved. PDCA is a great tool for starting on the journey to continuous improvement.
2. The Deming Cycle is a well-documented and proven methodology. There is no need to start from scratch and reinvent the wheel when an effective solution already exists.
3. With this method, change can be quick and solutions implemented in a timely fashion so that your organization can see benefits right away.

4 best practices when thinking about the Deming Cycle

Even though the use of the Deming Cycle seems simple at first glance, there are a number of things you should be aware of to increase the probability of success of your PDCA effort.

1. Be sure you have the support of not only senior leadership but the local leadership and process owner. While PDCA can be used at the local level, the synergy of having participation and support across the entire organization will result in a more efficient and effective process.
2. Identify and recruit the best members you can for participation in the project.
3. Stay focused and on task.
4. Try to gather as much data as is practical, and use the data to help drive your recommendations rather than just pure subjective hunches.