The Problem Solving Loop

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1. Identify and Select the Problem
2. Analyse the Problem
3. Generate Potential Solutions
4. Select and Plan the Solution
5. Implement the Solution
6. Evaluate the Solution
Step 1: Identify and Select the Problem

- The objective of this step is to identify the problem.
- The first step for everyone involved is to step back from the issue and use the STAR method.
- So consensus has these three elements:
  1. I agree.
  2. I don’t fully agree, but I can live with and support the agreement.
  3. I don’t agree, and I cannot live with or support the agreement.
- This can be done using the STAR method.
Step 1: Cont.

- The STAR and PDSA Methods are critical to the problem-solving process. Usually, better decisions are made using these processes.
Step 2: Analyze the Problem

- Analyzing essentially means collecting information. If there is not enough information, then further research will have to done.
- Once sufficient information has been collected, it is time to analyze what is going on.
- Try to come to consensus on why the particular problem or issue occurs.
Step 3: Generate Potential Solutions

- In this step use the brainstorming process should be used to generate as many solutions as possible.
- Toward the end of this brainstorming session, allow time to clarify your suggestion so there is a common understanding.
Step 4: Select and Plan a Solution

- You should prioritize the solutions into what would work the best. This is a slow process of elimination. There may be some possible suggestions that are immediately eliminated.
- Once this has been done, then discuss those solutions and come to consensus on the best solution.
Step 5: Implement the Solution

- This is the **DO** stage of PDSA. Make sure the solution can be tracked to have information to use in the **STUDY** stage. This may seem to be an easy stage, but it really requires a scientific approach to observing specifically what is going on with the solution.
Step 6: Evaluate the Solution

- This final step is the **STUDY** stage of PDSA. Did the solution work? If not—why not? This is a careful analysis stage that improves upon the best solution using the information gathered during the **DO** stage. After this analysis you should be ready to **ACT** upon their findings and the problem should be solved or better under control.