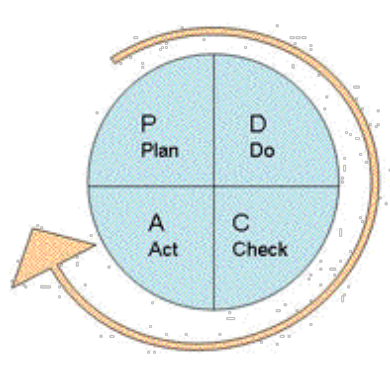




P-Glossary

PDCA Cycle

PDCA stands for Plan, Do, Check, and Act. The PDCA Cycle is a checklist of the four stages which one must go through to get from 'problem-faced' to 'problem solved'. The four stages are Plan-Do-Check-Act, and they are carried out in the cycle illustrated below. The concept of the PDCA Cycle was originally developed by Walter Shewhart, the pioneering statistician who developed statistical process control in the Bell Laboratories in the US during the 1930's. It is often referred to as 'the Shewhart Cycle'. It was taken up and promoted very effectively from the 1950s on by the famous Quality Management authority, W. Edwards Deming, and is consequently known by many as the "Deming Cycle" or "Deming Wheel". The following is the description of PDCA:



Plan: Determine the root cause of the problem then plan a change or a test aimed at improvement.

Do: Carry out the change or the test, preferably in a pilot or on a small scale.

Check: Check to see if the desired result was achieved, what or if anything went wrong, and what was learned.

Act: Adopt the change if the desired result was achieved. If the result was not as desired, repeat the cycle using knowledge obtained from the previous cycle.

Although this is a continuous cycle, one needs to start somewhere. As a problem solving process one would normally start at the Check stage, checking what the requirements are and reality is. The gap between reality and requirements will enable to determine if it is needed to Act. To use this as a problem solving technique it does rely on there being a process already in place, which can then be modified.