What’s an Easy Way to Learn about PDSA Cycles?

Learning Objectives

- Recognize that you run PDSA cycles every day.
- Discuss why games and exercises are important for learning improvement concepts.
- Explain why iterative testing is a fundamental part of improvement.

Description: In this IHI Open School Short, David Williams explains different ways to learn about improvement by doing it. He offers examples of how our daily routines include Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles — whether or not we know it — and how games and activities can help people hone their improvement skills in a controlled environment.

Watch the video at https://youtu.be/tq9sEQsrVI or read the transcript.

Discussion Questions

1. Think about your day so far. Can you identify any PDSA cycles you’ve run? What have you learned?
2. IHI often uses games, including an exercise using Mr. Potato Head dolls, to teach learners how to conduct PDSA cycles. How do you feel experiential training has helped (or could help) you better understand quality improvement concepts?
3. In a clinical setting, why would diverse opinions from a team be helpful when planning a PDSA cycle?
4. Why is iterative testing important to improvement?