









Open School

PDSA Comparison: Pilot vs. Implementation

(To learn more, see [QI 105: Leading Quality Improvement.](#))

Pilot Phase	Implementation Phase
 <p>PEOPLE: FEW</p> <p>The number of people affected by a pilot test is relatively small. Thus, the resistance to the change is often relatively low.</p>	 <p>PEOPLE: MANY</p> <p>The number of people affected during implementation is relatively large. Thus, there may be stronger resistance to the change.</p>
 <p>SUPPORT NEEDED: LOW</p> <p>Testers do not yet intend changes to be permanent and therefore do not need processes to maintain changes beyond the test period.</p>	 <p>SUPPORT NEEDED: HIGH</p> <p>Testers expect the change to become part of the routine operations of the system; supporting processes to maintain the change — e.g., feedback and measurement systems, job descriptions, and training — must be in place.</p>
 <p>TIME: SHORTER</p> <p>Cycles for testing changes can be rapid.</p>	 <p>TIME: LONGER</p> <p>Test cycles, which are larger in scale and more diverse in scope, generally require more time.</p>
 <p>TOLERANCE FOR FAILURE: HIGH</p> <p>It's OK (in fact, it's encouraged!) for testers to learn from mistakes. Between 25–50 percent of tests may not produce the desired results; these “failures” are important opportunities to learn.</p>	 <p>TOLERANCE FOR FAILURE: LOW</p> <p>Due to all of the above (i.e., the people, resources, and time involved) the tolerance for failure is relatively low during implementation. Testers should have a high degree of confidence that the changes they're implementing will result in improvement.</p>