

# A3 Quick Start Guide

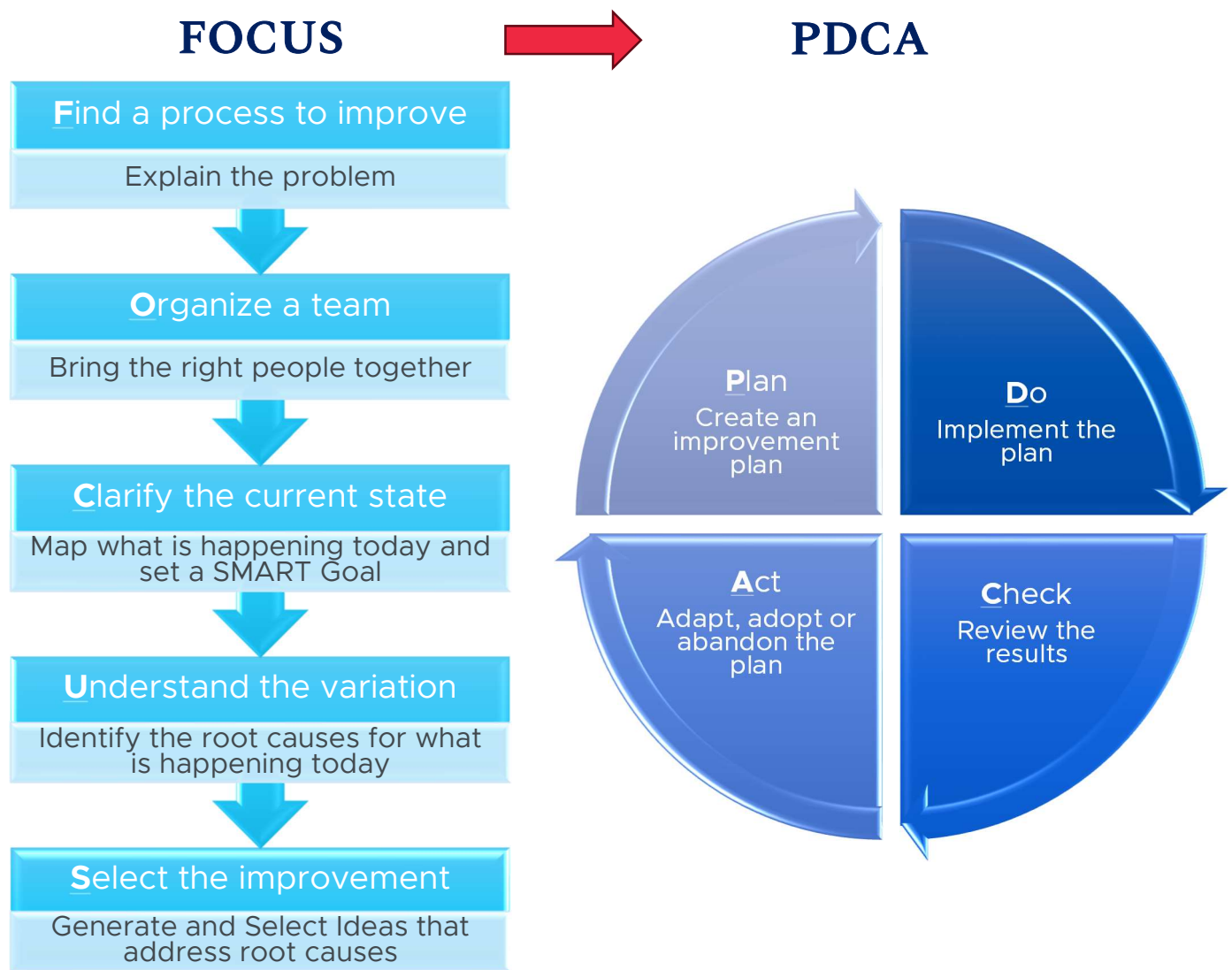
## What is the A3 Process?

The A3 Process is a way of thinking and solving problems that follows the scientific method. Follow the FOCUS-PDCA flow to help explain the most important parts of a problem and drives towards sustainable solutions.

## How to Get Started

Select an [A3 template](#) and use the A3 sections (FOCUS-PDCA) as a guide to work through the problem you are trying to solve.

Begin with FOCUS (left-side) to analyze and understand the current state of the problem. Then select your solution and move to the PDCA (right-side) to plan and execute your test(s) of change and build your sustainment plan.



Page 2: Includes helpful tools and coaching questions for each step of the A3.

# A3 Coaching Guide

## Applicable Tools & Coaching Questions

<p><b>Find a Process to Improve</b> (What is the problem?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go and See</li> <li>• Rounding</li> <li>• Value Stream</li> <li>• Waste Walk</li> <li>• How do you know there is a problem and why it is important to you?</li> <li>• Where and when does this problem arise? Define the scope.</li> <li>• What will happen if the problem is not solved? (disparities, safety, quality, financial)</li> <li>• What attempts have been made to solve the problem?</li> <li>• How does solving this problem assist in reaching your goals?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Plan &amp; Do the Improvement</b> (How will each selected change be carried out and evaluated?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Collection Plan</li> <li>• Small Tests of Change Worksheet</li> <li>• Visual Management</li> <li>• How will you know if the change is an improvement?</li> <li>• Who should be involve in the test?</li> <li>• How will you consider the impact on different groups as you expand your test? (i.e. race, gender, age, roles.)</li> <li>• How will you monitor the effectiveness of your change idea? (qualitative and/or quantitative)</li> <li>• How do you monitor for unintended negative impact? (ex: safety, disparities, financial burden, waste)</li> <li>• How will you obtain feedback from everyone involved or impacted?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organize a Team</b> (Who interacts with this process?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder Analysis</li> <li>• Value Stream</li> <li>• Who has the subject matter knowledge?</li> <li>• Who is affected by the identified problem, upstream or downstream from the process?</li> <li>• Who needs to be on the team versus consulted? (customer, staff, cross-functional partner)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Clarify the Current State</b> (What is truly happening today?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Collection Plan</li> <li>• Go and See</li> <li>• Process Map</li> <li>• Process Std Work</li> <li>• Rounding</li> <li>• Run Chart</li> <li>• SMART Goal</li> <li>• Spaghetti Diagram</li> <li>• Time Observation</li> <li>• Value Stream</li> <li>• Waste Walk</li> <li>• What data or information will help identify the current state and relate to the problem statement?</li> <li>• How might you breakdown your data to understand how groups are affected differently? (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender identity age, roles.)</li> <li>• What quantitative and qualitative evidence of disparity exists?</li> <li>• Who else could help you understand the current state?</li> <li>• What is the best way to capture a visual representation of the current state?</li> <li>• What SMART goal will you set to impact your problem statement?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Check the Results</b> (How do you know you're improving?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Collection Plan</li> <li>• Go and See</li> <li>• Rounding</li> <li>• Run Chart</li> <li>• Small Tests of Change Worksheet</li> <li>• Visual Management</li> <li>• How did your change idea impact your SMART goal?</li> <li>• What is the data and feedback telling you about the test of change?</li> <li>• What did your test uncover that was unexpected?</li> <li>• How are you visually managing and communicating the data?</li> <li>• How does the test of change impact different groups? (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender identity age, roles.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Understand the Variation</b> (What contributes to the problem?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Whys</li> <li>• Affinity Diagram</li> <li>• Fishbone Diagram</li> <li>• Pareto Diagram</li> <li>• Rounding</li> <li>• What are the root causes and how do you know?</li> <li>• What factors may be producing or contributing to identified disparities?</li> <li>• What data supports your conclusions?</li> <li>• How does the root cause relate to your problem statement and SMART goal?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Act &amp; Determine Next Steps</b> (What are the next steps based on what was learned?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huddles</li> <li>• Process Mapping</li> <li>• Process Std Work</li> <li>• Small Test of Change Worksheet</li> <li>• Value Stream</li> <li>• Visual Management</li> <li>• Based on your results, what action will you take: Adopt, Adapt, or Abandon?</li> <li>• What standard work needs to be updated?</li> <li>• How will this change be reflected in your staff training?</li> <li>• How will you continue to monitor the change and visually manage over time?</li> <li>• What data will prompt you to revisit your test of change?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Select the Improvement</b> (What change ideas have the biggest impact on the root causes?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affinity diagram</li> <li>• FACES</li> <li>• Multi-voting</li> <li>• PICK Chart</li> <li>• Process Map</li> <li>• Rounding</li> <li>• Value Stream</li> <li>• If you had unlimited resources and no barriers to fix this problem, what would you do?</li> <li>• What best practices exist within or external to the organization?</li> <li>• How do the change ideas address the root cause and problem?</li> <li>• What is the potential intended/unintended impacts upstream and downstream from this improvement idea? (inequities, waste removal, safety, potential harm, financial/budgetary).</li> <li>• How did you engage others outside of the improvement team in selecting the improvement?</li> <li>• How will you measure the impact and effort for each change idea and prioritize solutions?</li> </ul>	