

Activity: Debriefing a PDSA Test

(50 minutes)

Overview

This activity is meant to guide reflection conversations following the implementation of a test of a change idea. This conversation represents the *Study* and *Act* of the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle, and this activity exists to support the consolidation of learning and the transition to useful next steps.

Pre-Work

- Think through agenda timing and number of tests/testers to include in one meeting.
- Limit the focus to one change idea per meeting (more can take too much time to share out).
- Multiple testers are OK, but you may need to condense the share-out to make time.

Facilitator Tips

- You may want to process the data and fill in the PDSA form in advance. Highlighting important results can help your team get to the heart of the conversation more quickly.
- Sharing out is for context building, connecting work to previous tests, and narrative building to carry the work forward; try to accomplish all three within 15 minutes.

Meeting Agenda

1. Frame Goal (5 minutes)

- Our goal is to turn our learning from this test into a decision about the next test.
- Remind team members about the overall goal and provide any necessary context from previous tests that the team will need to make sense of this PDSA. Much of this will be found in the *Plan* section of the PDSA form.

2. Share-Out (15 minutes)

- Ask the team member(s) who carried out the test to share what happened. Encourage them to talk about both the data and anecdotes of interest.
- Make sure you cover all areas of the *Do* section of the PDSA.

3. Discuss (20 minutes)

- Decide as a group what should go into the *Study* section of the PDSA.

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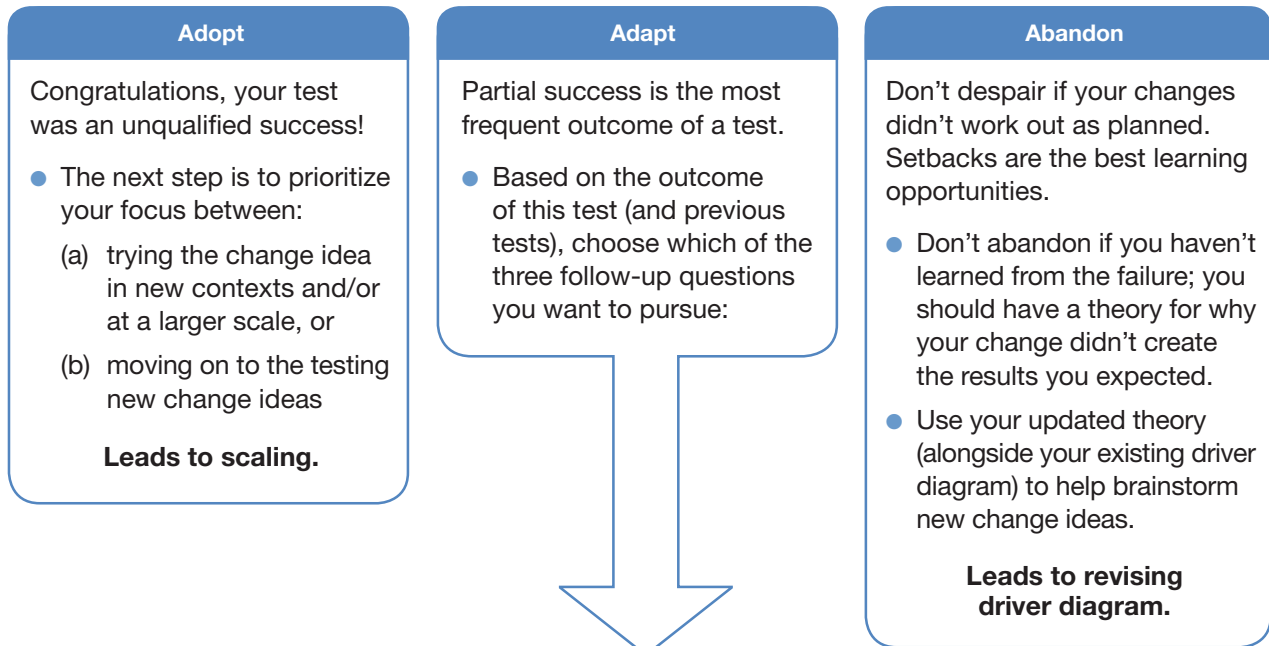
- It should include your interpretation of the meaning of the data, as well as any other learning that took place.
- Pay particular attention to surprises and failures; they are the best opportunity to learn. If you encounter a surprise or setback, make sure you spend time figuring out what you think it means. Even if you can only hypothesize, write your guesses down. They will be useful later.

4. Decide (10 minutes)

- Use what you have learned to guide your decision about what to do next. Complete the *Act* section of the PDSA. Use the graphic on the next page to guide your thinking.

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Based on the outcome of your test(s), choose one:



Adapt

Is the next step to **optimize**?

- If the change idea seems to be working well with most students, consider working out the small kinks now, while you are testing on a small scale. It is much easier to refine and polish now than it is to do so after it is implemented across multiple classrooms/sites.
- *Rule of thumb: "When you become confident in your change, do two more tests to be sure."*

Is the next step to **troubleshoot**?

- If the change works for some students but not for others, or only creates part of the impact you expected to see, then you may want to focus on troubleshooting. How can you modify the practice to make it more effective? Think about small tweaks that can become the focus of the next test.
- Be care about making large changes. Testing a new big change while you are still figuring out the last change to your practice can overwhelm your capacity to learn and be counterproductive. Be respectful of your own time and don't take on too much.

Is the next step to **learn** about a change idea or test its feasibility?

- If the change in practice is something you are not very experienced with, it may be best to continue to test with an open mind. Make *your learning* the goal of these early tests, rather than trying to rush to the perfect solution. The earlier you gain a deep understanding of how the change works in practice and how it can meet student needs, the easier it will be to refine the practice.
- Pay close attention to your focal students. When we are trying something new we won't always be able to predict outcomes, and sometimes we measure the wrong things. By staying observant you may notice something that challenges your assumptions and offers a window into a deeper understanding of the practice and your students.

Leads to a new test.