

Tool: Revising Your Driver Diagram

As the working representation of your theory of improvement, the driver diagram should always be considered a work in progress. As you engage in improvement work, learn more about your problem's many manifestations, and experience successes and setbacks, your driver diagram should evolve to reflect your most current thinking. Use the guidance in this tool to prepare for revisions to your driver diagram.

WHEN

you should revise your driver diagram

- **After you have learned something important**, either through PDSA tests, problem analysis, or desk research.
- **At a natural pause point**, such as before winter or summer break.
- **Before sharing** with others outside of your team.

WHY

you should revise your driver diagram

- **Capture** and name parts of your evolving hypothesis.
- **Organize** your team's work on multiple change ideas.
- **Review your progress** toward your aim.
- **Communicate** your strategy to others.

WHO

you should involve in your revision

- Leaders of the improvement team.
 - Principal testers of the change ideas.
 - Other team members who were heavily involved.
- OR
- Your whole team, if time and interest allow.

HOW you should refine your driver diagram

- **Challenge** a part of your theory that didn't work as intended when you tried it with students. Use what setbacks and failures have taught you to change the parts of the diagram that didn't pass muster. Remove failed change ideas and consider revising attached drivers to reflect your learning.
- **Trim** the parts of the diagram that you won't be able to get to. Often, a brainstorming session produces more ideas than we have time to deal with. If parts of your diagram are unrealistic in the short- and medium-term, they can be trimmed.
- **Expand** on parts of the diagram where critical details are missing. If you have uncovered components of your strategy that you didn't think of or include initially, they can be added here. If something you have learned or observed is central, add it.
- **Clarify** your language to better reflect what you now know about what works and what doesn't. Make sure the language you use to describe your theory keeps up with your growing expertise.
- **Consolidate** the practices you have developed where appropriate. Consider combining change ideas that are refinements of each other, while keeping separate the ones that can exist independently of each other.