

How can you implement the improvements?

- What steps need to be taken to implement the solutions and how long will they take?
- Is there leadership support to move forward?
- Are additional resources (e.g., money, staff, equipment) needed?
- Is training needed?
- Have the persons responsible for implementing the change given input about potential road-blocks or barriers, or factors that will facilitate the implementation?
- Has a communication plan been developed to inform all the stakeholders about the proposed changes in the process?
- What is the plan for monitoring the process once the change has been implemented?

How successful are the improvements?

- How does the comparison of the before and after data fit with your expectations?
- Where are your expectations met? Where are they not met?
- Where are the areas in which the improvement needs fine tuning?
- What do you need to do to roll out the improvement in a larger area, or system-wide?
- How can you effectively share this information about improvement and innovation?

What are the next steps?

- How do you sustain the implementation of your improvement?
- How do you continue to evaluate and improve your process?
- Where are there other areas for improvement?
- What lessons have been learned about process improvement?
- How can you continue to utilize the skills developed by the team members?

One approach to Continuous Quality Improvement is Penn State's IMPROVE model

Penn State's IMPROVE Model

- I** Identify and Select Process for Improvement
- M** Map the Critical Process
- P** Prepare Analysis of Process Performance
- R** Research and Develop Possible Solutions
- O** Organize and Implement Improvements
- V** Verify and Document Results
- E** Evaluate and Plan for Continuous Improvement

© 1994 The Pennsylvania State University

For more information, or assistance in your improvement or innovation initiatives, contact:

Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment
502 Rider Building
University Park, PA 16802-4819
Phone 814-863-8721
Fax 814-863-7031

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901; Tel 814-865-4700/V, 814-863-1150/TTY.

Produced by the Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment
U. Ed. OPR 10-07



Penn State *Quality*

Questions to Guide Your Quality Journey

Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment

www.psu.edu/president/pia



Questions to guide your quality journey...

What is the current work environment?

- Whom do you serve? Who are your customers, clients, or constituents (internal or external - the immediate users of your unit's products or services)?
- What services or products do you provide to your customers, clients, or constituents? What do your products or services do or make possible for them?
- What do they expect of the services you provide?
- What processes are in place to meet or exceed those expectations?
- Who are your suppliers, those who provide input for your processes, products, or services? What information do you provide to them? What information do they need from you?
- Who are your unit's other stakeholders (groups which have an interest in your work unit and the products or services you provide)? What do they expect? What information do you provide to them about your unit, and your products and services?
- What data do you have from your customers or co-workers that indicate how well you are meeting or not meeting expectations?
- Which processes are within the scope of your unit's control?
- Which process will give you the most improvement for your effort?
- Is there a group of people who know enough to improve this process?
- Does your workplace welcome change?

What are the current processes?

- What are the steps you go through as you provide your product or service, from the time you receive a request, receive input from your suppliers, or start a process, to

the time you deliver your product or service to your client?

- How do you respond to missing or incorrect material or information?
- Are there times between the steps when nothing is happening? How long and frequent are these "wait" states?

What performance data about the processes do you have or would you like to have?

- What data would you like to have about your work unit's performance to know how well you are meeting stakeholders' expectations?
- What change in those measures would indicate improvement?
- What are specific client, supplier, and other stakeholder *expectations* for your product or service?
 - What do clients, suppliers, and other stakeholders realistically expect with regard to your product or service?
 - Ideally, what would clients, suppliers, and other stakeholders like to see in your product or service?
 - What leads them to select your service or product rather than another? What leads them to select another provider?
- What are specific client, supplier, and other stakeholder *satisfaction or performance measures* regarding their *expectations* for your product or service? For example:
 - Quality
 - Courtesy in dealing with them
 - Cost
 - Sharing of status information
 - Time from order to delivery
 - Error rate

What are some possible approaches to improve the processes?

1. Identifying possible solutions

- Is information missing or incorrect?
- Are there unnecessary steps?
- Does each step add value to the process?
- Are any steps duplicated?
- Are steps in logical sequence?
- Are there unnecessary layers of approval?
- Are there overlapping paper and electronic processes?
- Is all paperwork necessary?
- Are multiple people responsible for the same task?
- Does the process take too much time?
- Can you reduce wait time?
- Do unnecessary complications or delays exist?
- Where are the bottlenecks—places where everything backs up or slows down?
- Is there rework being done?
- Can you provide a new or better product or service?

2. Evaluating possible solutions

- What are the potential benefits of the solutions?
- What could go wrong with the solutions?
- What are the projected costs?
- Have you gathered ideas from others involved in the process about how it can be improved?
- Are the solutions based on what you have learned?
- Do the solutions address the causes?
- Have you thought about eliminating or redesigning some of the steps in the process?
- Have you identified ways to try out each solution?
- Will the improvement address customer concerns?