Tips for Successful PDSA Cycles

PDSA Cycle
Once your team has selected an idea to try out, the next step is to test it. The PDSA cycle is used to conduct rapid tests of change on a small scale, learn from the results, and apply the learning to the next test cycle. The cycle links the tests of change, refining the process with each iteration until the redesigned process is ready for broad-scale implementation.

Tips
The following are some tips for successful PDSA cycles:

- Improvement occurs in small steps. Start very small, and run PDSA cycles in rapid succession.

- Repeated attempts are often needed to refine strategies or to implement new changes.

- Assess regularly to improve or revise the plan.

- Plan communication with all who will participate in the tests as early as possible, ie, the planning phase.

- Plan frequent communication with all members staff to inform them of the progress toward the aim, to celebrate success, and to increase buy-in and interest in the improvement work.

- Be a strong presence and active endorser of QI within your practice.

- Recognize team efforts on a regular basis in a meaningful way.
Additional Resources

To learn more, see *Tips for Testing Changes* on the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Web site: http://www.ihi.org/IHI/Sections/Improvement/ImprovementMethods/HowToImprove/tipfortestingchanges.htm. This site also includes an excerpt from *The Improvement Guide*, which discusses ways to mitigate the risks of running improvement tests while maximizing learning.