
Quality Guide for Teams

Guiding teacher teams in their strategic planning



*Qual4*²

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1. Introduction of the topic for teacher teams



The QUAL4T2 project is a follow up of the QUAL4T project, which focused on quality awareness among individual teachers. The QUAL4T2 project focuses on the needs of the teams. It intends to further improve Quality in VET by guiding teacher teams in Europe in strategic planning. Teachers stated in their feedback to the first QUAL4T project that they still feel that they don't have enough knowledge and tools to write a good year plan and follow the Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) cycle.

Teams in VET education are facing the problem of prioritizing how they spend their workdays. Teachers need to teach, coach, visit companies, prepare lessons, but also meet as a team to evaluate student results and other outcomes. As a follow up, teams need to set aims and plan actions for further improvement in their team plans. It is crucial that the right aims are chosen and the right actions planned! In QUAL4T2, the project partners aim to contribute directly to the improvement of outcomes of quality systems in Europe's institutes, by investing in teachers' professionalization to develop more effectiveness and involvement of teachers/trainers in the quality strategic planning. We aim to use a bottom-up approach when getting teams aware of quality mechanisms and address teachers in teams as the professionals that they are. The development of prototype products mixed with indispensable teacher feedback tends to lead to a further change of quality culture and a set of final quality tools that help teams in further development of their quality mechanisms. Moreover, this is definitely needed to connect the long-

term strategies and policies of the institutes with the short-term actions on the 'work floor' of the teams.

To reach these objectives the partners of the project have developed ready to use products:

A quality guide with chapters on how to build up an effective year plan, and several tools to help teams get there, including models for the plan itself.

A book with best practices from the pilots that we will perform in 2017/2018.

A training program that we will use within our own organizations, and a shorter program that all VET organizations can use to train their own teams, or that can even be used by teams themselves.

The project called "Further Quality Improvement for VET, guiding teacher Teams in Europe in strategic planning" is funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ KA2 Grant program from 11.11.2016 - 10.05.2019. Landstede Group in the Netherlands is the project coordinator. The project partners are CIOFS-Formazione Professionale in Italy, Koege Handelsskole in Denmark, IDEC (Consultants – high technology applications – Training) in Greece, and PoliteknikakastegiaTxorierri in Spain.



2. Management Summation



FURTHER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FOR VET, GUIDING TEACHER TEAMS IN EUROPE IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

Your goals

You want to:

- Improve the quality culture in your Institution.
- Familiarise and involve all the departments, teams and staff in the quality endeavour.
- Encourage continuous quality Improvement at all levels.
- Involve and empower teachers and teams to create and contribute to quality initiatives.
- Guide your teacher teams in strategic planning
- Give quality a better press – inspire a bottom up quality culture.
- Encourage innovation in quality (on a daily basis).
- Form an ever more professional staff body.
- Improve your educational services and results.

Why?

The national research reports and the European outcomes together with the results of the zero questionnaires have helped the partnership find the strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats teams in Europe face regarding their strategic planning. Researches carried out in Denmark, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain confirm the EU, national and regional drive to improve the quality in VET education with approved quality standard management

systems in place in those countries. The research confirms the support of agencies and ministries of education at national level and EQAVET at European level. However, not every staff member shares the same Q awareness within the same organization - or even has the same idea about their team Q culture within their own team. Sometimes teachers lack knowledge about other necessary processes in their schools.

In the reports and zero questionnaires carried out with different teams, there was consistent evidence that an important percentage of teachers and teams:

- Don't feel well equipped with information to make the right analysis for their year plan.
- Don't feel they have the competences to make the right analysis for their year plan or to formulate relevant aims after the analysis.
- Don't feel well equipped to prioritize their aims/ambitions.
- Don't feel well equipped to transfer their aims into activities.
- Have different concepts of what a year plan is.

QUAL4T2 ...

QUAL4T2 offers practical and inspiring tools, especially for teams to empower and help them write a good year plan and follow the Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) cycle. A QUAL4T2 Quality Guide including Q Tools, a book with Best Practices (to be expected in autumn 2017) and a Training Programme (to be expected in spring 2018) to train teams or to be used by teams themselves will be available to help teachers understand and contribute to quality culture, improving their service as educators, their teaching, and results for students.

Tool 4: The Five Elements, and the Danish Case Study in the Storybook, are especially useful resources to create an annual cycle of team meetings with specific focuses and individual inputs.

For more information about the QUAL4T2 Quality Guide, Best Practices and Training Program please contact one of the QUAL4T2 partners below:

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3. The effects of a cyclical quality system



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The **PDCA** (Plan, Do, Check, Act) **cycle** is the most used methodology to implement a **continuous improvement system** in an organization. It is a four-stage approach for continually improving processes, products or services, and for resolving problems. It involves systematically testing possible solutions, assessing the results, and implementing the ones that have proven to work.

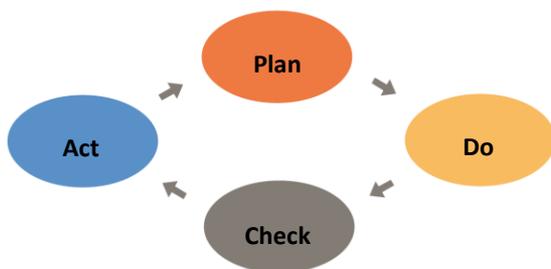
THE FOUR STEPS IN THE CYCLE ARE:

Plan: Identify and analyse the problem or opportunity, develop hypotheses about what the issues may be, and decide which one to test.

Do: Test the potential solution, ideally on a small scale, and measure the results.

Check: Study the result, measure effectiveness, and decide whether the hypothesis is supported or not. If it hasn't worked, you return to Step 1. If it has worked, you go on to Step 4.

Act: If the solution was successful, implement it.



Once step 4 is completed, you have to return to the step 1 periodically to implement more new improvements in a continuous feedback loop.

This means that nothing is ever seen as a status quo – there are continuous efforts to improve which result in small, often imperceptible, changes over time. These incremental changes add up to substantial changes over the long term, without having to go through any radical innovation. It can be a much gentler and employee-friendly way to institute the changes that must occur as an organisation grows and adapts to its changing environment.

Organisations that follow the PDCA ongoing improvement cycle approach often find in return:

People are more satisfied – they have a direct impact on the way things are done.

Improved commitment – team members have more saying in their job and are more inclined to commit to doing a good job.

Improved retention – satisfied and engaged people are more likely to stay.

Improved competitiveness – increases in efficiency tend to contribute to more satisfied customers (students, families and companies).

Improved problem solving – looking at processes from a solutions perspective allows employees to solve problems continuously.

4. Cultures of quality improvement

Improved teams – working together to solve problems helps build and strengthen existing teams



EQAVET

The European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) is an important player in the EU. EQAVET is a community of practice bringing together member states, social partners and the European Commission to promote European collaboration in developing and improving quality assurance in VET by using the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework. The EQAVET website <http://www.eqavet.eu/gns/home.aspx> provides excellent information for teachers, trainers, teams and managers from vocational education and training.

In the end, Quality Assurance is one of the five Riga priorities in the Copenhagen process for VET.

The EQAVET Framework

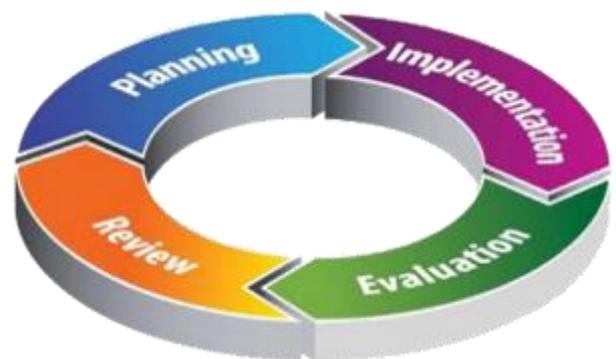
The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (the EQAVET Framework) provides a European-wide system to help member states and stakeholders to document, develop, monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their VET provision and quality management practices.

It can be applied at both system and VET provider levels and can therefore be used to assess the efficiency of VET provision. It is adaptable to the different national systems and it can be used in accordance with national legislation and practice.

THE FRAMEWORK:

- includes the need for regular monitoring (involving internal and external evaluation mechanisms) and reporting on progress;
- uses common quality criteria and indicative descriptors to underpin the monitoring and reporting arrangements;
- stresses the importance of common indicators to support the evaluation, monitoring and quality assurance of VET systems and providers.

It is accompanied by a set of 10 indicators, which may be used as a “toolbox” by countries as they work on adapting and developing their VET systems. The indicators are not designed for benchmarking but rather to support a culture of quality assurance in VET at system level.



EQAVET Framework follows a quality cycle of four stages: Planning, implementation, evaluation, and review. For each stage, there is a set of indicative descriptors, examples from different member states and indicators, to support the VET providers build their own quality assurance system.

EQAVET FOUR STAGES

Stage 1: Planning.	Stage 2. IMPLEMENTATION	Stage 3. EVALUATION	Stage 4. Review
Set up clear, appropriate and measurable goals and objectives in terms of policies, procedures, tasks and human resources	Establish procedures to ensure the achievement of goals and objectives.	Design mechanisms for the evaluation of achievements and outcomes by collecting and processing data in order to make informed assessments	Develop procedures in order to achieve the targeted outcomes and / or new objectives

At the end, the EQAVET Framework means:

To increase transparency and mobility.

To valorise permeability in a lifelong learning perspective.

To make VET more attractive.

Source: <https://www.eqavet.eu/>

QUALITY CULTURE IN COUNTRIES - NLQAVET

Some partner countries also have an own website, like NLQAVET (<http://www.eqavet.nl>), and they often provide information in English language too. The Netherlands and some other countries work on an innovative approach, namely a concept where culture of quality is key to change in VET providers, based on the integration of four elements:

quality systems/ tools, like audit, self-evaluation;

action plans as the result of planning;

awareness of individuals of what quality is for them and their role in quality development;

the ideas teacher teams/ groups have/ share what they understand as quality and what they want for quality in the future. Ownership of quality by teacher teams is the focus.

NLQAVET INTRODUCED A FRAME OF REFERENCE ABOUT QUALITY CULTURE

Working efficiently and cyclically to improve the quality of education

The NLQAVET programme encourages VET teaching teams to become aware of the wider aspects involved in educational quality as often the defect mode and perception is that Quality involves mainly management systems (visible and collective Quality strategies), while there are other aspects of equal importance such as the invisible and individual attitudes and actions of teaching staff, teams and institutions all of which contribute to **QUALITY CULTURE** (see below). The understanding and development of a **QUALITY**

CULTURE is essential to achieve the ultimate aim of improving quality for students in VET education. **QUALITY CULTURE** could be described as the “implicit codes of conduct and self-evident truths within an organisation”. If these can also be made explicit through awareness and development it provides a platform for improvement.

While some aspects of **QUALITY** are visible and can be measured quantitatively (the parts of the iceberg above water in the cartoons – behaviours and action and management systems), other aspects are invisible (Quality awareness and Culture) but contribute as much to the quality of education and to the development of a practical, more satisfying quality culture which is owned and integrated by teaching staff in VET education.



Quality oriented behaviour refers to behavior of teachers and others, aimed at improving the quality of education.



The presence of a quality system improves working on the quality of education. A system could for example be a system, such as the PDCA cycle, but could also be an instrument, such as a curriculum.



Quality awareness means striving for quality on an individual level, based on one's own values and intentions. These values and intentions are keys to the behavior of those involved.



In a quality culture, the common aim towards quality is expressed.

The table below describes the four aspects above: both the visible and invisible – the individual and the collective which are involved in developing a Quality Culture in Education. Often staff perceives only the first aspect (Quality management systems) which are often process and results oriented.

VISIBLE	<p>2. Conduct /professionalism</p> <p>individual skills, employee competences, diplomas and professional conduct</p> <p>updated TRAINING</p>	<p>1. Quality Systems</p> <p>Quality systems such as ISO, INK or Six Sigma</p> <p>excellence in curricular offer, examination conditions, internal organization, ICT environment etc.</p>
INVISIBLE	<p>3. Quality Awareness</p> <p>individual quality awareness individual commitment to quality mind-set</p> <p>annual development review, reflection on and improvement of personal core competences, corrective interviews or reflections on student feedback</p>	<p>4. Quality Culture</p> <p>collaborative patterns, convictions and values</p> <p>encouraging teams and departments to make their current quality culture more explicit and to further develop it through peer review, dialogue or open discussion</p>
INDIVIDUAL		COLLECTIVE

Teaching staff are encouraged through the creation of a **TEAM PORTRAIT** to approach Quality with a broader understanding of both **WHAT** they do to provide a quality education (both the product – student results, skills acquisition and satisfaction, and the process towards achieving those results – the pedagogical implementation) and **HOW** they do this, both individually and collectively (the values, standards, interpretations and conceptualizations of quality as a teacher, in their team, dept. and organization).

Over a series of teacher team meetings, a teaching team creates a **TEAM PORTRAIT** which supports the aim of improving the quality of VET education and which will contribute to a vibrant, comprehensive **QUALITY CULTURE**. The main focus is ultimately on the core task of collectively providing an excellent education.

The creation of the **TEAM PORTRAIT** helps the team to: gain and enhance insight into their own team quality culture

strengthen unity, team identity and the professional effectiveness of their team

The steps in this process are explained in chapter 8. Working towards a successful team plan – the roadmap.

STEP 1: The team explores and expresses the team vision with regards to educational quality; what they understand by educational quality; and ultimately they reach a collective vision.

STEP 2: The team prioritizes concrete educational quality improvements in an annual team plan; which priorities the team wants to establish into concrete objectives to pursue - unifying their vision from step 1 with real data and input from present quality systems feedback (audits, evaluations etc.).

STEP 3: The team identifies the present **QUALITY CULTURE** in their organization or department. HOW they handle the collective responsibility for educational quality; whether the present actions are process and results oriented or people or innovation oriented; awareness of how this impacts on their objectives; identifying present strengths and weaknesses.

STEP 4: The team translates their **TEAM PORTRAIT** as gathered from STEPS 1-3 into a concrete action plan; designing concrete activities and actions aimed at improvement; the final team quality portrait is linked to a realistic **ACTION PLAN**.

Further steps and meetings include continuous reviewing and modification of objectives and actions as required. *Teams are the owners of their vision and quality oriented action plans.* The emphasis shifts from centralized to decentralized teaching teams and Quality processes. To provide quality education is to integrate sometimes *competing values and orientations* in Quality Culture. A healthy **QUALITY CULTURE** will incorporate aspects of all orientations.

- **PROCESS-ORIENTED:** focuses mainly on control and management. There is a willingness to adhere to procedures and regulations, to have information and documentation in order to manage a collective responsibility (based on hard facts).
- = often the fixed habit approach in organisations.

- **RESULT-ORIENTED:** continuous results-orientation and a competitiveness with regards to other educational institutions, departments, teams and employees. The emphasis is on results - intakes, drop-out rates and diploma results (also based on hard facts).
- **PEOPLE-ORIENTED:** the focus is mainly on a strong team ethic, a feeling of us, collective values and objectives are collectively expressed, re-examined and, if necessary, further developed. The people concerned attach great value to sharing experiences and other qualitative information.
- **INNOVATION-ORIENTED:** the focus is on flexibility, creativity, innovation, being open to the outside world and forward thinking; the emphasis is on being future-proof, able to achieve optimum education quality over time.

Teachers often favour people oriented or innovation oriented aspects while all are important and complementary.

It is very important to strengthen **QUALITY CULTURE** in teams to achieve effective quality improvement. Working together builds trust and helps team members share responsibility.

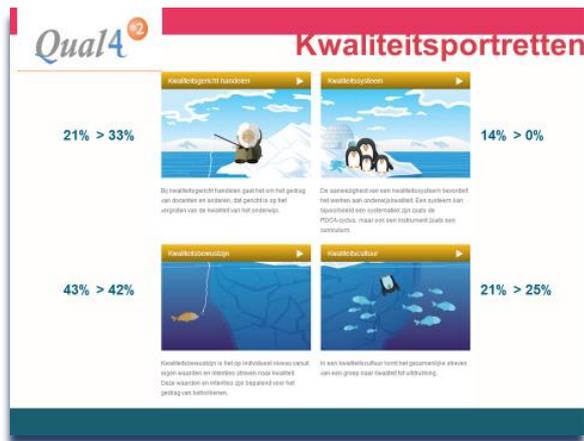
What is also important is for all team members to share the same idea, when talking about their common culture of quality improvement; that they can build upon and follow the norms and values as expressed in the **TEAM PORTRAIT** – and indeed throughout the organisation.

Often team members are not aware of a common behaviour or culture, because they have never communicated about or agreed upon a mutual vision. Not having a mutual vision on the quality culture can cause problems on other topics at team meetings.

Visit the NLQAVET <http://www.eqavet.nl> website for more information on **TEAM PORTRAITS** (information is also available in English). The site describes and promotes the innovative approach to quality culture in VET education currently being developed in the Netherlands.

The **NLQAVET model of QUALITY CULTURE** has also been used by the QUAL4T2 project to design the zero-questionnaire. This is a starting point for conversations within teams that fill out the questionnaire.

Practical example of the use of the portraits in the Netherlands in the school year 2017-2018:



This slide comes from one of the power point presentations that were prepared for a team at the end of the pilot year. The slide shows the 4 portraits, but also what happened within a year, as team members scored for one of the portraits that fitted them most at the beginning and at the end of the pilot.

In this case the advice for the team was: “After one year every team member seems to feel secure about the working and effectiveness of the Quality management system. Now all focus on other quality aspects. However, someone should keep an eye on the system side and the data that are received... “

At the first meeting, - when only the first scores were visible, one could explain the complete slide as:

- Individual orientation on the left side of the portraits versus group (or even better: team) behavior.
- Visible behaviour on the top of the portrait and not directly visible behaviour below the sea level.

- Also, the question was asked: Where do you want to be as a team? For instance: If a team just starts to work with a quality system, the team members will be glad when most of them can state that they are system oriented.

5. Teamwork versus individual quality improvement



Quality improvement is a method for continuously finding better ways to provide better service. At its core, quality improvement is a team process. Why? Under the right circumstances, teams harness the knowledge, skills, experience and perspectives of different individuals to make lasting improvements. The team's ability as a whole is more than the sum of the abilities of individual members. It multiplies the potential of individual members.

However, teamwork doesn't happen by accident. It requires effort and commitment, and a willingness to accept the challenges of different individuals working together. Inputs from all team members need to be solicited. Questions need to be asked and answered. Ideas need to be shared and agreed on - because for a team to be effective, the team members must share a **common, collective goal** and work together to achieve it. This goal aspect is very critical in the team because teamwork relies on individuals ... individuals performing to their best. Therefore, the organisation cannot ignore or negate the individual's needs. Actually, the leader's role should be to help each individual align his or her own needs and interests with the goals and pursuits of the team. A team that is filled with individuals who are committed to and passionate about the team's goals, because they coincide with their own needs, is far more powerful than a team filled with individuals who have over-ridden their own needs, for the good of the team, and are co-operating in an uninspired, uninterested manner.



6. Testimonials from teachers and trainers



There is a general feeling among the team members that they participate in the writing of the team plan, and therefore they have knowledge about its content. Regarding this, below are some testimonials and suggestions from participating teachers and trainers in the project:

- "Our vision/ambition for our organization is to be innovative and open to change and arise niche needs or the market, to have open communication and a good business climate within the company, to be punctual with obligations to third parties and to provide as good quality services as possible."* (Team Leader, EL)
- "The possibility of change is what gives the team members motivation and the feeling of being at the forefront."* (Quality Staff, ES)
- "A team plan can be considered a good one when it is the result of a deep and accurate analysis of data and events shared within the team members. Each and every member of a team plays a key role for the development of the plan when they feel as being an active and important part of the group. It can be achieved if the aims/objective are jointly agreed and chosen according to priority and real possibility to reach them in a scheduled time."* (Quality Staff, IT)
- "Some of the most important ways of achieving a successful teamwork is that the individual team member has the opportunity to know what is going on in the organization – this means that everybody knows when to discuss certain issues, e.g. strategy, budget, classes etc. All members know the overall strategy of the team."* (Teacher/Team Coordinator, DK)
- "Highly relevant is how you formulate your ambitions as a team. I rather use the word ambitions, because - unless there is a structural failing effort to meet them - a team plan should not contain standard improvements based on the legal requirements. If a team has a good grip on the basic requirements, ideally I could imagine them setting only one ambition in a team year plan, based on their educational vision, and focus on it together. This is the glue between individual teachers, all working together in full commitment on improving /reaching one higher aim. A certain percentage of the professionalization hours should be spent on this, specialising the team in a specific topic. Working on a team plan will then bring team and management to a higher professional level."* (Quality Staff, NL)

7. SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

The national research reports and the European outcomes together with the results of the zero questionnaires have helped the partnership find the strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and

threats teams in Europe face regarding their strategic planning.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Theoretical knowledge of successful factors of a good year plan</p> <p>Easy access to sources</p> <p>Opportunities to learn through workshops, seminars and peer learning activities</p> <p>Freedom in the choice of teaching methods</p> <p>Annual cycles for planning</p> <p>Analyses of the year results</p> <p>Common use of Total Quality Management System (EFQM)</p>	<p>Lack of financial resources</p> <p>Lack of permanent or full time teachers or continuous changes in staff members</p> <p>Not a strong culture of quality in all the members of staff, especially teachers. Seen as tools mainly for management</p> <p>Different concept of what a year plan is both in the countries and in the teams</p> <p>The Check and especially the Act part of the PDCA cycle</p> <p>Ownership of the team plan</p> <p>Quality of evaluation and Feedback: how, frequency, when...</p> <p>Team members have different ideas about their team Q culture within their own team – they often have different roles and expertise in the organisation</p> <p>Team leadership</p> <p>Not every staff member shares the same Q awareness within the same organization</p> <p>Sometimes teachers lack knowledge about all the other necessary processes in their school</p> <p>Lack of communication among all the interested parties, non-teaching staff included</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Reference management models</p> <p>Benchmarking</p> <p>Support from the ministries of education</p> <p>Accessible information</p> <p>Help from good practices or experts</p> <p>European projects results</p> <p>National agency associations' support</p> <p>EQAVET support</p>	<p>Different frameworks</p> <p>Changes in ISO standards</p> <p>Different cultures of quality between countries</p> <p>Digital professionalization of teachers</p>

8. Working towards a successful team plan – the roadmap



The yearly team plan is a key document for any organisation. It explains where teams are going, and it helps everyone stay on track. The team plan reinforces that teams have a clear purpose and a "true north" to work towards. This aligns their daily tasks with the long-term goals of their products.

The QUAL4T2 proposes a Roadmap for an effective team plan. It is no. 8 in the Toolbox.

AWARENESS AND EXPECTATIONS OF TEAM MEMBERS.

The work on the new year team plan should start by analysing the current situation and the expectations of the team members. QUAL4T2 proposes the teams to use instrument N°1 in the Toolbox to consult the team members about their own perception of their current year plan, their aims and ambitions, the evaluations they use, and the way they work together. By sharing and analysing the results of this questionnaire together, the team will be ready to proceed in their route towards a successful year plan.



No.1 Questionnaire
No. 2 Team Work Cafe
No. 3 The Lighthouse
No. 4 The Five Elements
No. 9 Vision/Mission Development

DECIDING WHICH TOPICS YOU IDENTIFY AS CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR Q IMPROVEMENT.

Identifying Critical Success Factors is important, as it allows teams to focus their efforts on building their capabilities to meet the critical success factors and to develop objectives associated to those factors. A "good"

CSF begins with an action verb and clearly and concisely conveys what is important and should attend to. Verbs that characterize actions: attract, perform, expand, monitor, manage, deploy, etc. ("poor CSFs" start with: enhance, correct, up-grade ...)

Examples: "monitor students' needs and future professional trends"



No. 2 Team Work Cafe
No. 6 Self-Assessment
No. 8 Roadmap to Effective Team Planning
No. 12 Establishing Team Priorities

MEASURING OF THESE TOPICS

Measurement is important to determine whether changes that are believed to lead to improvements in quality do in fact result in improvements.

GATHERING OF DATA

To demonstrate that the changes made in an improvement plan result in the predicted positive outcomes, data must be collected, analysed and presented. However, before starting any gathering of data, a team has to ask themselves:

- What is the purpose of the evaluation?
- What do we need to know?
- Who will use the information and how?

Collecting data is a major process of any evaluation. However, it is important to remember that method should follow purpose. The team should focus their evaluation by answering the questions above: think



about the purpose of the evaluation, the information that is needed, and the stakeholders. Then the team can decide about the most appropriate method/s to collect the information.

The QUAL4t2 partnership provides an example tool, no. 10, for teams and quality staff to plan their data collection activities for the performance indicators that are specified in their quality framework



ANALYSING THE QUALITY DATA

Once measures have been set and data collected, analysis is required to begin to answer the question of whether the changes made are resulting in the expected improvements.

Some of the questions to take into account are:

- What analytical tools will be used?
- Who will do the analyses and prepare the charts?
- Who will receive and review the results? How often?

ANALYSING THE LAST YEAR PLAN

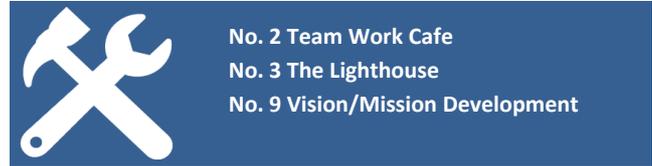
Check last year's team plan (if you already use one) and check which topic you also have to integrate into the new team plan. Reasons may be: Unfinished activity; aim not reached; activities did not lead to the desired change of the situation; lack of staff...

ABOUT DREAMS AND AMBITIONS

When institutions are considering their long-term strategy, teams should be given the possibility to dream about what they would like education to look like in 2035, without being hampered by potential obstacles, and by thinking only in possibilities. As Harriet Tubman said "Every great dream begins with a dreamer." By doing so, teams could not only provide valuable input to the organization but it would be easier to align the strategic ambitions of the organization with the strategic ambitions of the teams. Moreover, as proven by the research carried out in the organization of Daimler-Chrysler Netherlands by Bart A.G. Bossink, Jan -Nico Blauw in 2002, the improvement processes are driven by the strategic ambitions of the organization.

Teams can use instrument No. 2 to organize their dream session

In the planning section below, teams can find supporting ideas and instruments for the planning phase.



THE PLANNING

The PDCA cycle consists of a planning phase before implementation. In this phase, it is important to set clear objectives and to develop a concrete plan for the implementation.

Identifying all aims for improvement

The team's aims should include specific measurable goals that are clear to all the members, and will result in establishing a common purpose among them.



Prioritizing

Once all the aims and actions for improvement have been described, the team must look at their resources and set priorities if the amount of work that needs to be done surpasses the resources available to accomplish the work. Since emotions often run high when making these kinds of decisions, a structured and objective approach can be helpful in achieving consensus. Instrument no. 12 in the toolkit provides such an approach.



DIFFERENTIATING GOALS (RELATED TO VI)

Within the prioritized goals there may be an option to differentiate. How much time is set for the realization of the team plan? Can all team members work on all goals,

or do you need to arrange that specific team specialists are involved in specific goals? You may already foresee a lack of time for the work on the team plan in specific months, and these should be excluded from the time line. The question is not “if”, but “when”, “who”, and “how”. Realistic Planning can help the team in this process. See end of this section

Teachers’ (team members) needs

A team is made up of different individuals with their own idiosyncrasies. Therefore, a good team leader will try to take them into account and learn about each team member’s needs related to:

- His/her need for knowledge and skill about teamwork.
- His/her acceptance and understanding about the team’s goals.
- His/her workload and responsibilities.
- His/her role within the team.
- His/her feeling about teamwork at that point.
- His/her need recognition/incentives.



No. 1 Questionnaire
No. 5 Feedback in teams
No. 6 Self-Assessment

Influencing circumstances in a team

Resources are required to make the necessary changes in response to the needs of the team and its members. Resource requirements should have been developed and documented in the team plan, because you need to ask yourself as a team a number of basic questions, to ensure a realistic year plan:

- How many time/hours do we have to work on the year plan?
- How many teachers/ team members can be included in the work?
- In which period of the year can they work on the year plan?
- Do we have the expertise in the team to complete the activities? And is this available all year?
- What is the budget that we can spend (for instance to include external experts or let a specialist develop a product)?

The resources required will include the financial, human and formative resources.

FINAL SET OF AIMS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Once the team has reached this point, they are ready to select and focus on an agreed number of realistic aims for the year plan.



No. 13 Team Plan - Model
No. 14 Short Term Improvement Plan
No. 15 Teaching Team Year Plan
No. 11 Preventing Risks

THE DO OF PDCA

The implementation phase is putting the planned activities in practice. In general, this phase can be seen as a testing phase to see how the implementation of the development influences reality.

THE CHECK OF PDCA

The evaluation phase consists of an assessment by stakeholders on the developments. These can be learners, the staff or employers. In this phase, it is important to collect data on the evaluation.



No. 5 Feedback in teams
No. 10 (Review) Data Gathering

THE FINAL ANALYSING OF THE PLAN AND THE PDCA ACT TOWARDS THE NEW CYCLES

This review phase can be seen as an analysis of the evaluation phase that identifies weaknesses and strengths of the implementation phase and the plan. The aim is to reflect on how to improve the developments and to Act; set a basis for further plans.

Recommendations for this most important phase are:

- Keep in mind that the review phase is a central part of the PDCA Cycle.
- Make sure that a review phase takes place, reflect on and make use of evaluation results.
- Recognise, review and build on positive outcomes and create a positive failure culture.
- Plan the review phase in advance and reserve time and resources.



- Engage staff by making evaluation results available, fostering discussion and providing support.
- Act fast in areas where it is necessary for instance drop-outs etc.
- Use the review phase to further develop your quality system.

DON'T FORGET TO CELEBRATE!!!

Celebrating achievement is an important part of building and maintaining an effective, self-assured team. There are many ways to celebrate individual or team achievement. As said above, the team leader needs to understand his/her team members and what motivates them.

BE GOOD AND TELL ABOUT IT – INFORM YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Sometimes it's easy to forget the importance of keeping stakeholders well informed. Proud and fully engaged team members should also remember how important it is to keep students, families, companies and public bodies informed of your achievements!

THE NEW PLANNING

The PDCA cycle is an ongoing improvement cycle. It should be repeated again and again for continuous improvement.

REALISTIC PLANNING

Once a team has established¹ strategic goals, has divided them in subordinate-intermediate objectives¹, has assigned roles, tasks and individual responsibility¹, it is important to foresee a "comparison program" - i.e. a series of scheduled meetings during which the team will have the possibility to analyse performances in terms of time, cost and quality. In other words, the team will check the sustainability of the team-plan on-going and evaluate whether any changes may eventually serve to make it more realistic.

In order for a team-plan to be realistic, it is necessary to evaluate the performances when you still have time and resources to apply corrective measures and to communicate with the responsible of individual activities to make sure of the understanding of goals and needs. It is really important for the team to understand the interaction of all members of the group and the

importance of being active, in order to allow each member to act properly: All members of the team should always be aware of the operational performances, and understand whether it is necessary to support the team or individual members and share opportunities for improvement and/or any problems to overcome.

The frequency and the dates of such meetings may vary: they cannot be defined a priori, once and for all, but must be agreed upon by the team - even though we suggest to at least set them at the achievement of milestones or at predetermined time intervals, according to the activity to be carried out, the degree of uncertainty, to the risks and hazards that can be generated during the course of the implementation.

However, any re-modeling of the team-plan must be consulted and approved by all team members. In fact, the flow of communication and sharing within the team remain fundamental: the knowledge of the predictions, the causes of deviations and possible measures to contain them, is an aspect essential to prevent the emergence of relational conflicts between components

HOW TO USE:

- Individually list all activities/priorities¹ set in the year plan - or highlight those whose you are in charge of (you can use the already approved¹ tool so as not to multiply tools)
- Write down achieved results, both in terms of outputs and outcomes
- Check the following elements/data¹ for each activity:
 - Real time needed to achieve it - use a GANTT or a simple calendar.
 - Number of persons actually involved.
 - Real costs.
 - Quality of results.
- Note any deviations from what expected and analyse, in the team, all opportunities for improvements¹ or gaps to overcome.

- The team coordinator, or another team member agreed by the group, reports the common decisions and possible actions to be implemented individually or in team.
- Make sure that each individual member of the team understands critical points, requested level of performance and final deliverable outcome.
- Attach such report to the team-plan and use it as an input for next team meeting to evaluate changes and/or to list other new commitments.

¹ Cross-check tool 8 "*Road-map for team plan*"

¹ Cross-check tool 9 "*Vision/mission development for teams*"

¹ Cross-check tool 13 "*Team plan model*"

¹ Cross-check tool 12 "*Setting priorities as a team*"

¹ Cross-check tool 10 "*Data gathering*"

¹ Cross-check tool 11 "*Risk-based thinking*"



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