

An improvement science approach to understanding a problem in your system.

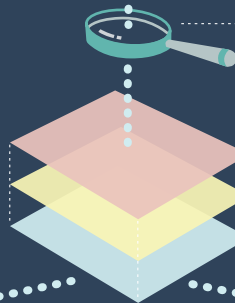
By taking the time to learn how your system is producing the problem you are trying to solve, you lay the foundation for focusing efforts and identifying the right changes that lead to improvement.



WHERE YOU ARE

WHY DOES THIS GAP EXIST?

WHERE YOU WANT TO BE



Uncover and Examine the Causes

- What are the causes of the problem? What's your evidence?
- Which causes are high-leverage areas to work on?

What is prompting you to engage in the work of understanding the problem?

You probably already have a challenging problem in your system and a team of colleagues who are committed to solving that problem.

What do you do after identifying causes of the gap between where you are and where you want to be?

You may move on to focusing your team's collective efforts, identifying change ideas, and testing them.

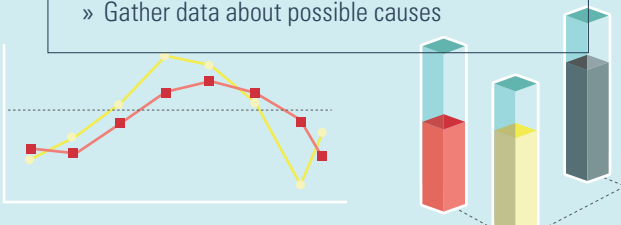
Collectively make sense of data about the problem



- » What is the extent of the problem?
- » How does the problem vary over time? Across sites? Between groups?

Related tools/strategies

- » Focus on variation: Pareto charts, run charts
- » Gather data about possible causes



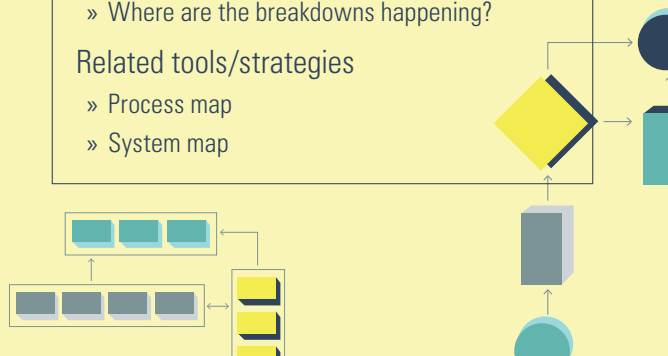
Map the system



- » What is the system that is producing the problem?
- » Where are the breakdowns happening?

Related tools/strategies

- » Process map
- » System map



Understand the user experience



- » How do users experience the system?
- » Where do users identify system breakdowns?

Related tools/strategies

- » Empathy interviews and journey maps
- » Shadowing

