

Suggestions for Developing a SMART Action Plan



1. Spend sufficient time on the PLAN as deciding what to try out in an improvement theory is critical. You can work hard and long on the wrong thing. **Notice in the PDSA cycle that PLAN is 50% of the cycle.**
2. For school improvement planning, **make sure each grade level or department develops an action plan aligned to the SMART Goal.** When grade level teams or departments do not own their action plan, they do not value their work. They are doing the action for someone else, not for themselves. There is little ownership or buy-in. When they align it to their own work, they make connections and see how their work connects in improving the goal.
3. Keep the action plan simple and significant. **When selecting strategies for action limit the list to, at most, the two or three strategies that the team feels will bring them the greatest results. A SMART Goal must be accompanied by a SMART Action Plan.**
4. **Examine foundational strategies.** Examine the best practices of the Professional Learning Community or other continuous improvement framework. Examine the foundational Indicators of Rising Star's 5 ESSENTIALS.
5. As you examine possible new strategies, **correlate the strategy with your current practice to be certain you are doing something together that is different than your current practice.** If we keep doing what we have always done, we will get the same results.

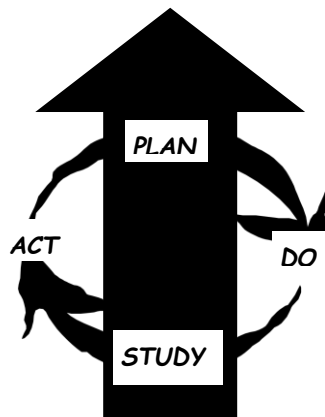
6. As you examine possible new strategies, compare them with John Hattie's research in *Visual Learning* to **be certain that they have a high impact on improving student achievement**. Select strategies that yield great impact.
7. Be certain that you consider **what professional learning you and your team will need to ensure consistent implementation and deep understanding of how to effectively use the strategy. Be clear about what you will DO during implementation**. Be certain you have the resources and support necessary for full implementation.
8. **Identify what evidence you will collect to progress monitor** to be able to tell if the strategies you are using are adding value and making a difference in student achievement. **Study results of implementation and compare them to baseline or beginning data to measure whether improvement is occurring. STUDY**
9. **Act on sustaining use of strategies that are yielding improved results. Abandon strategies after sufficient time that are not yielding improved results and select new strategies**. Begin the PDSA cycle again.
10. Use a standardized action plan template. **Share action plan strategies**. See what the grade level before-and-after is doing. **Provide training, support and coaching for developing and implementing action plans**.

A good action plan sets clear direction for improved instruction. Improved instruction will most likely produce improved results. Remember—every SMART Goal must be accompanied by a SMART action plan.

Plan and Do are associated with SMART meetings 3 and 4. Study and Act are associated with meeting 5.

SMART GOAL: _____

Indicator(s)	Measure(s)	Target(s)



PLAN

What does the data tell us about the importance of addressing this goal?

What have we been doing in the past to address the outcome of this goal?

What baseline data do we have?

Why is this goal important? Do we feel acting on this goal will improve teaching and learning?

What are the prerequisite skills of knowledge necessary to accomplish this goal?

Our Improvement Theory

What research-based **new** strategy or strategies will we use to improve the results of our goal?

What professional development will we need to implement the strategy or strategies effectively? Who? When? Where?

What evidence will we collect and share to be certain we are implementing the strategy or strategies effectively?

What assessment data will we examine to see if implementing the new strategy or strategies is or are making a difference?

What support or resources will we need to implement the new strategy or strategies?

DO

When will we begin the implementation of our new strategy or strategies?

How long will we implement before we progress monitor?

What information will we share about the implementation of our **new** strategy or strategies at our team meetings. How can we support one another with strategy implementation?

What data and information will we collect to document implementation progress?

STUDY

When will we do our first check to measure the impact of our plan on the goal?

What measurement/evaluation tool will we use?

How will we report our progress?

ACT

If we are not making progress, how will we share our results in a way that redirects our actions? How and when will we develop a new improvement theory?

If we are making progress how will we share our success? What adjustments if any will we make to our action plan?

How does the Study-Act part of the process lead to team cohesiveness and effectiveness?