



Sustaining Improvements

Three Anchor Habits to fit effective new work from improvement projects into your regular work

1. Measure, monitor, and communicate progress.

- a. Pick the most important measures used in the intensive project.
- b. Set an out-of-bounds value for each of these key indicators, the point at which you need to take action to get good performance back.
- c. Monitor these measures diligently, so you know quickly when your hard work is eroding.
- d. When a key indicator slips out-of-bounds, swarm the problem with the original project team. Learn what's going wrong and how to get back on track.
- e. Communicate the status and progress for key indicators regularly. Everyone needs to know how well you are doing. Everyone must know why these numbers matter to patients and staff.

2. Get clear on the changes to sustain. Document these expectations everywhere.

- a. Make a list of the specific tasks and activities to sustain. What specific, observable, measurable changes got your numbers where you wanted them?
- b. Document the individual staff role/s whose job it is to keep doing these new things. Share the list.
- c. Allow people to add to it, if appropriate. Refine and finalize the list.
- d. Identify or develop champions for each change. (For instance, the lead registration clerk could be a champion for confirmation calls if it's the registration clerks' role to do the calls.)
- e. Document the new responsibilities for use in supervision and performance management. Be clear about these new expectations, so people know what to do. Some places to document:
 - Core competencies and other annual re-training
 - Job descriptions
 - Policies and procedures
 - Process map workflows (use those swim lanes)
 - New staff orientation training
 - Performance evaluations

3. Manage for learning and improvement.

- a. Celebrate team and individual successes. This includes strong effort as well as goal achievement.
- b. Use patient voices. Gather quotes and comment cards to share why these changes matter.
- c. Catch people doing well. Observe staff in action during the workday, on the floor.
- d. Shadow and coach people who need more help to sustain their changes.
- e. As in #1 "communicate progress," communicate for accountability.
 - One-to-one with frontline staff and supervisors
 - Management meetings
 - Staff meetings (Try "10 minutes for measures," and/or staff recognition)
 - Newsletters
 - Dedicated email updates