

A3 Problem Solving

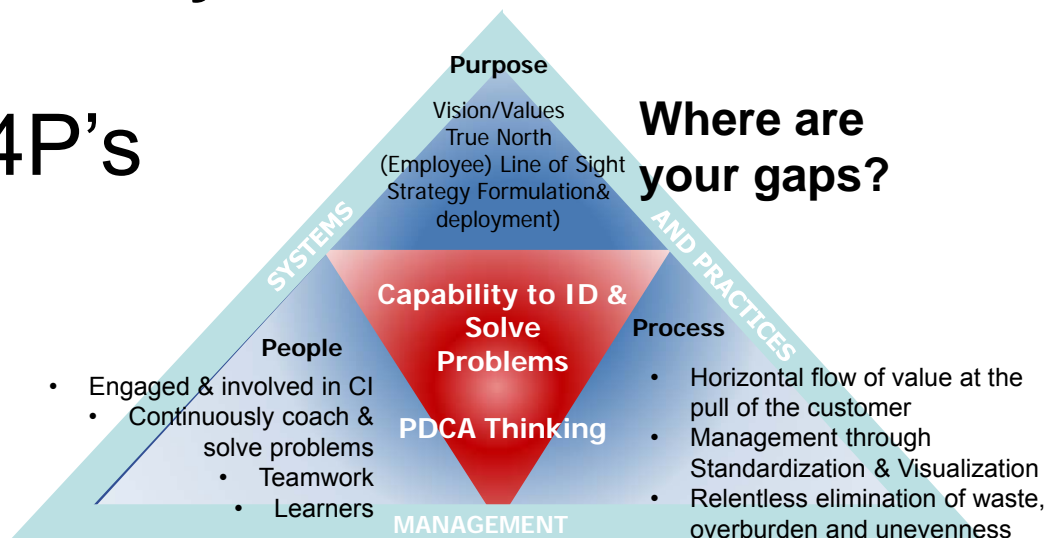
Tracey Richardson

- How can A3 thinking (PDCA) assist in successful business/leadership/coaching practices?
- What role does standardization play in leadership/coaching practices/behaviors and A3 thinking?
- Role of a Coach with A3
- How to engage/coach people using an A3
- What is your Line of Sight? How do you link your daily work to the business indicators?
- Daily actions of a coach using A3



A Way to Practice Business

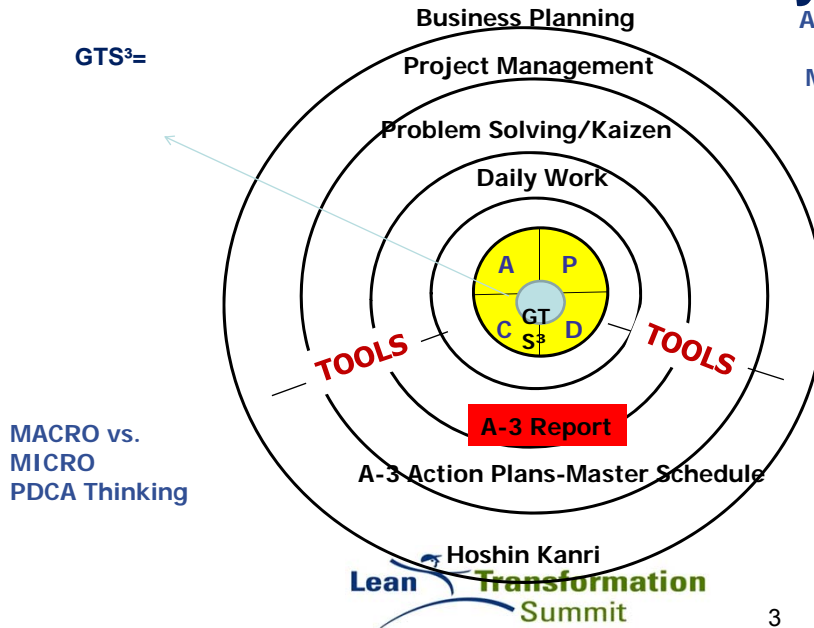
4P's



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PDCA is the core of our Daily Work

A way an Organization does Business – Managing by PDCA at every level!!



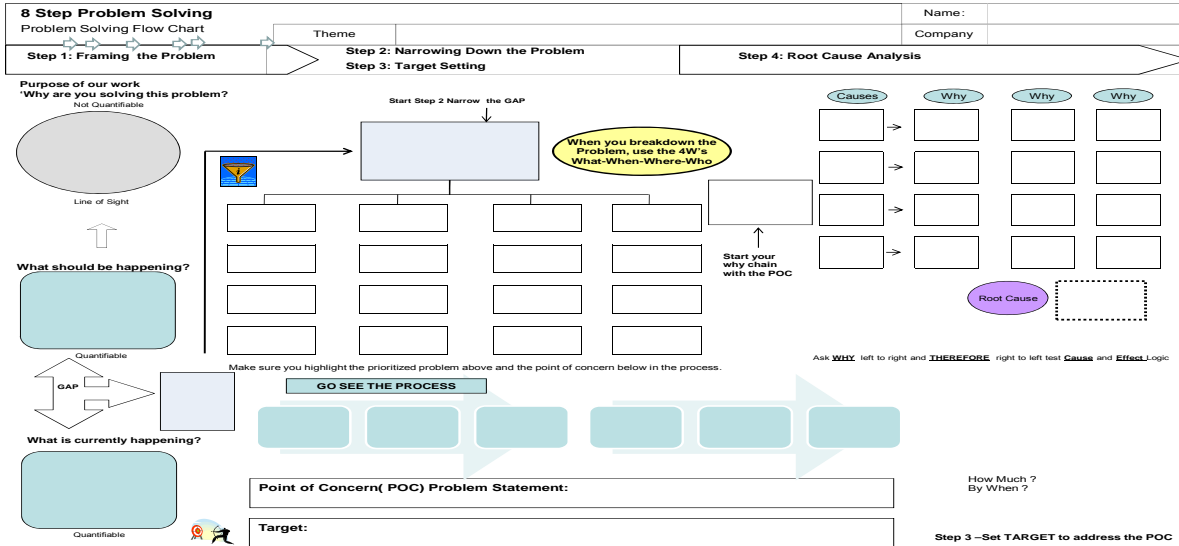
MACRO vs. MICRO PDCA Thinking

An Example Problem Solving A3

8 Step- A3 Format

<p>Step 1: Clarify the Problem Ultimate Goal: Ideal Situation: Current Situation: Gap:</p>	<p>Step 5: Develop Countermeasures</p>
<p>Step 2: Break down the Problem:</p>	
<p>Step 3 : Target Setting</p>	
<p>Step 4: Analyze Root Cause</p>	
	<p>Step 6: See CounterMeasure Through (Implementation)</p>
	<p>Step 7: Monitor both Results and Processes Step 8: Standardize Successful Processes</p>

How important is the **A3** template vs. the thinking behind the template? Look at the Problem Solving Flowchart



Page 2 of the Problem Solving Flowchart **A3**

Step 5: Countermeasure Development

Brainstorm Potential Countermeasures: (A)

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	

Step 5: Countermeasure Development

Criteria Matrix (1-10 scale)-bad to good (B)

Countermeasure (s)	Cost	Feasibility	Effectiveness	Impact	Risk Involved	Total

Step 5: Countermeasure Development

Step 5: Implementation Plan (Detailed Action Plan) Gantt Chart (C)

What	Who	Where	When

Step 6: Following the Countermeasures Through

"How's is your implementation Plan going?"

(Implementation steps from Step 5)	Reporting	Informing	Consulting	Evaluation

Step 7: Check the Process and Results

Did you meet the Target in Step 3?

If so did you contribute to the GAP? How much?

Did you look at the 3 viewpoints?

- 1) Customer: (Did I meet their needs?)
- 2) Your own: (What did I learn?—Did I use a good POCa process?)
- 3) The Company: (Did I meet the Purpose in Step 1?)

Step 8: Standardize and Share

Was your problem solving activity a success?

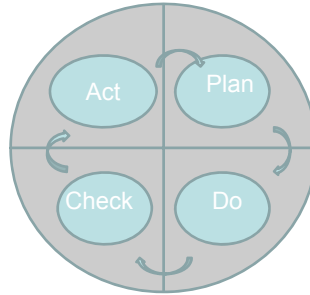
Did you standardized the new process or procedure? If so how?

Did you share with other affected areas?

The “Thinking” behind the A3 Report

Act:

1. Evaluate overall success
2. Determine how much of the GAP was closed
3. Standardize and Share effective practices
4. Choose another problem to further close the GAP



Plan Phase:

1. Recognize abnormality
2. Understand Purpose
3. What is actually happening?
4. What should be happening?
5. What is the Gap
6. Breakdown the Problem, and prioritize
7. Go to the process and determine Point of Concern
8. Set Target
9. Cause Analysis and Root Cause
10. Determine Countermeasures and develop plan

Check Phase:

1. Check effectiveness of countermeasures
2. Compare Plan vs. Actual
3. Evaluate Customer, Company, and your own viewpoint

Do Phase:

1. Ensure proper reporting, informing and consulting of the plan (status report)
2. Monitor – resolve potential issues with contingencies
3. Consensus – Buy-in



When we start to coach an A3 we must ask the right ?'s

If we have the ability to surface problems or see abnormality then what do we do?

How do we think?

What questions are we asking?

What is the current situation?

VS

What should be happening?



Where Does **A3** Fit In?

- It's **not just** a **"Tool"** – it's a visual manifestation of our thinking to share our wisdom with others.
- The **A3** is only as good as the **"dialogue"** that creates it. (?’s asked at the gemba).
- The **A3** is 5S of information- not everything I did in between.
- Understanding the importance of the **"people side"** of the **A3** is more important than the actual tool itself. (Don't just fill in the boxes) Engage, Coach, Involve and Challenge your people at every level



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How does **A3** thinking assist with the Continuous Improvement and Standardization "Process"

Purposely creating a problem: Raising the bar

Improve
Standardization



**Overlooked
step between
M and I**

Maintain
Standardization

Achieve
Standardization

Define the Standard
Or an individual role

Foundation for development,
maintenance and improvement of the
system by motivated employees

Improvement of standards and standard
ways to achieve better results

Maintenance of standards and standard
ways to achieve expected results

Establish
Predictability

Achieve
Repeatability

Define Expected Results

**If it isn't broke –
break it !!**



Coaching Points with **A3**/PDCA

- Begin from the business need (clearly defined business problem- KPI's- Q, S, P, C, HRTD)- Purpose
- 50% of a leader/coach's job is to develop their people (teacher at gemba (work area) asking questions about abnormalities)
- GO SEE, Ask WHY, and Show Respect
- Focus on individual's role (servant leadership) throughout their career and develop their Problem Solving skills (PDCA)
- "Tell me and I will forget, show me and I might remember, involve me and I will understand"
- Confucius



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Change Efforts to embed different “Tools” like **A3** into our culture often fail because:

- The “What – How – *Why*” approach –we forget the WHY!!!
- Leaders/Coaches don't explain why they are introducing change and what is going to happen
*As a Leader, always explain **WHY** change is needed and how you need their help!*
- Leaders/Coaches try to impose new artifacts and behaviors on top of existing values and assumptions
*As a Leader, you need to understand and **EXPOSE** key assumptions inside your organization before you attempt to introduce new ones*



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What Senior Leaders Have Heard:

- Lean, **A3** among other “so called tools” are often considered a “*Program*” or “*Flavor of the Month*”
- Lean must be done in a specific way to be effective (benchmarking and best practices)
- Changing the “culture” making the tools like **A3** a “way of thinking” – Long Journey
- That they don’t have always to be involved to be successful
- If it works for them it can work for us in the same way



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Let’s Check Our Thinking

Assumptions → Thinking → Actions → Results

What are our assumptions within our daily work that affects our thinking and leads to a specific action(s) that creates a result

Is that result continual, repeatable, or sustainable? Are you getting lucky and attaining results by your assumptions? (Lack of data or facts)

How many assumptions do you make in a single day?



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Let's see how Value-Added you are:

*What is the ultimate goal of your work?
(Personal Line of Sight?)*

Understand what makes our jobs “value added to the company—does it relate to the company’s goals and key performance indicators (Quality, Safety, Productivity and Cost)?



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What are we looking for in coaches to promote **A3/PDCA**?

- What are the traits and skills needed today by employees in your locations? (**Competencies**)
- What are the attitudes and beliefs you want them to have about their work? (**Values / Principles**)
- What are the traits and skills they will need for the future? (**Long term sustainability-growth**)
- What will it take to engage them in the business and their own personal development? (**Cues**)



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A3 Thinking at the Gemba

Coach/Engage people at every level by:

- Coaching them to see the value stream (where is the waste?)
- Empower people to help them improve their jobs
- Lean shouldn't mean "Less Employees Are Needed"
- Build people before product
- Giving them deep technical knowledge and profound knowledge of process through shared wisdom
- Pushing responsibility for value stream management and improvement to the lowest practical level of line management (using PDCA/A3)
- Creating frequent problem solving loops between coaches and process owners



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Coaches engaging people in A3 Thinking

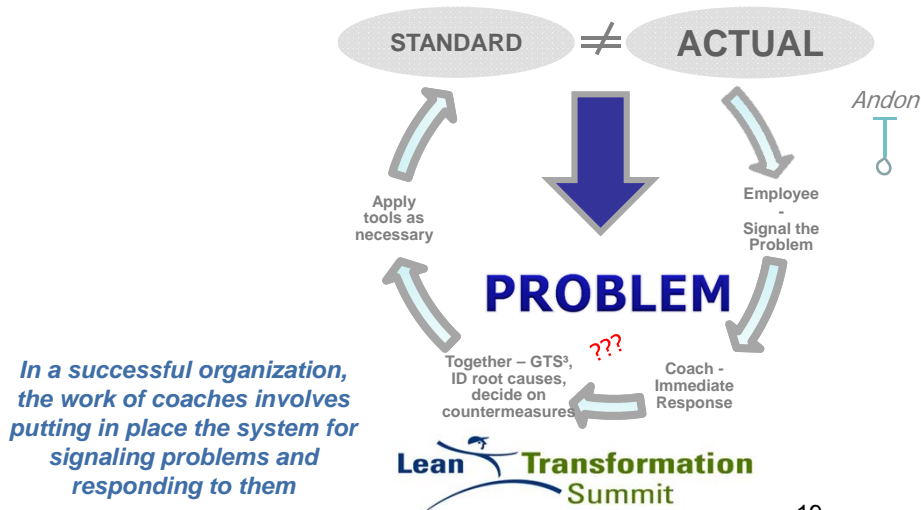
- Always start by walking a mile in their shoes. "What do you see here" Attempt to determine the other person's frame of reference
- Listen for main thoughts or ideas
- View the thoughts and ideas from the other person's perspective
- Paraphrase key points in your own words
- Ask questions. "Why do you think that is?"
- Show you are, (actually be) really interested and want to understand



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The Work of Leaders/Coaches in a PDCA / A3 Culture

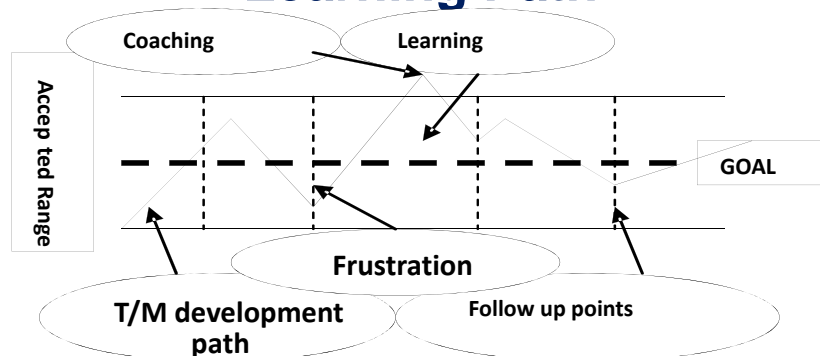
Developing Systems & People to set Standards & Identify and Correct Out-of-Standard Conditions



In a successful organization, the work of coaches involves putting in place the system for signaling problems and responding to them

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Learning Path



Monitor, Coach and Develop team members through task completion giving a sense of accomplishment (growth):

- Determine an appropriate method to follow-up and coach as the team members follows their developmental path.
- Encourage team members to “Think” along the way by asking the right questions
- Coach team members when their path may go off target (**Coach over-enthusiasm as well as frustration along the way**)
- Evaluate their “thinking” process and evaluate overall results
- Give feedback and recognize their growth
- Continue to develop through Go-See, engagement, and involvement

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Comments – Questions Time

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Good Luck with your Lean Journey!!

Remember it's a journey not a race 😊

