



The PAM Series ©

Practical Aid Memoirs for the workplace

PAM 3

‘Improvements’



‘Establish and maintain systems of improvement’

Communication Training Improvements





Forward

Practical Aide Memoirs are just that, practical. The **PAMs** are intended as a reference to assist with decision-making, planning and action. The resultant action is intended to improve the workplace performance of individuals and teams, lifting the performance of the company, sustainably. The PAMs are about creating an environment of success; they provide sufficient information to allow the reader to easily digest the content and put it into practice at the workplace.

PAM 1 ‘Communication’ is about laying the foundations. PAM 1 starts with the individual, then places the individual within and around the team. Throughout PAM 1 there is an emphasis on communication skills, an orientation towards objectives and outcomes, and reflective practice.

PAM 2 ‘Training’ puts the framework in place. The PAM establishes and maintains the learning environment and sets in place a culture of personal and professional development.

PAM 3 ‘Improvements’ builds on PAMs 1 and 2 and is all about creating an environment of Continuous Improvement. This PAM remains practical due to the principle of being ‘applied’; easy to grasp and transferable into the workplace.

PAM 4 ‘Logistics’ provides a practical guide to logistics. The PAM has been put together to act as a springboard to a review of logistics and planning for the optimisation of operations.

PAM 5 ‘The Food Safety Miscellany’ is a tour of topics relevant to the food production environment and is meant to serve as a point of reference. PAM 5 is a handy guide to have at the workplace in support of training and development.

PAM 6 ‘Projects’ is derived from an established, well-known framework and is presented as a series of templates that can be adapted for use at the workplace. The approach offers a structured, flexible, and product-based approach to project management.

PAM 7 ‘Interaction’ takes PAM 1 further and is a focus on advanced communication and coaching; the PAM is based on how information is transferred and processed.

Combined, the PAMs represent a **Systems Approach** to workplace improvements.

David Browne



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Set 1 Foundations

1.1 Lean principles

The Improvements function of the organisation is built on shared Lean principles. These principles can be applied to any work environment, and to whatever range and scope as is necessary.

The key principles that underpin lean are to:

- **Specify value.** Identify the value of the product from the point of view of the customer
- **Map the value stream.** Map out all the steps involved in operations. This is normally carried out using the technique of business process modelling. Once mapped out any steps that do not add value to the process are eliminated
- **Create flow.** Improve the effectiveness of the steps so that the sequence is the most efficient way of getting the product to the customer
- **Establish pull.** Liaise with customers to identify their next desired product and initiate activity meets those desires
- **Seek perfection.** Create an environment of continuous improvement by building in automatic and constant reviews of each of the principles

Why the principles matter. If every individual within supported, co-ordinated teams are operating to these principles, and to well established and co-ordinated workplace systems, the organisation will be operating at its optimum level.

The term *Lean* is often used in conjunction with Six Sigma. Rather than being an approach based on management principles, Six Sigma is an approach based on statistical analysis. The two are often used together because of the desire to optimise operational activities, and to mathematically model processes and measure performance. PAM 3 focuses on operations and Lean disciplines in Sets 1 and 2, then places emphasis on statistical processes in Set 3. Lean discipline coupled with performance monitoring will highlight opportunities for improvement. This approach also ensures PAM 3 remains *practical*.



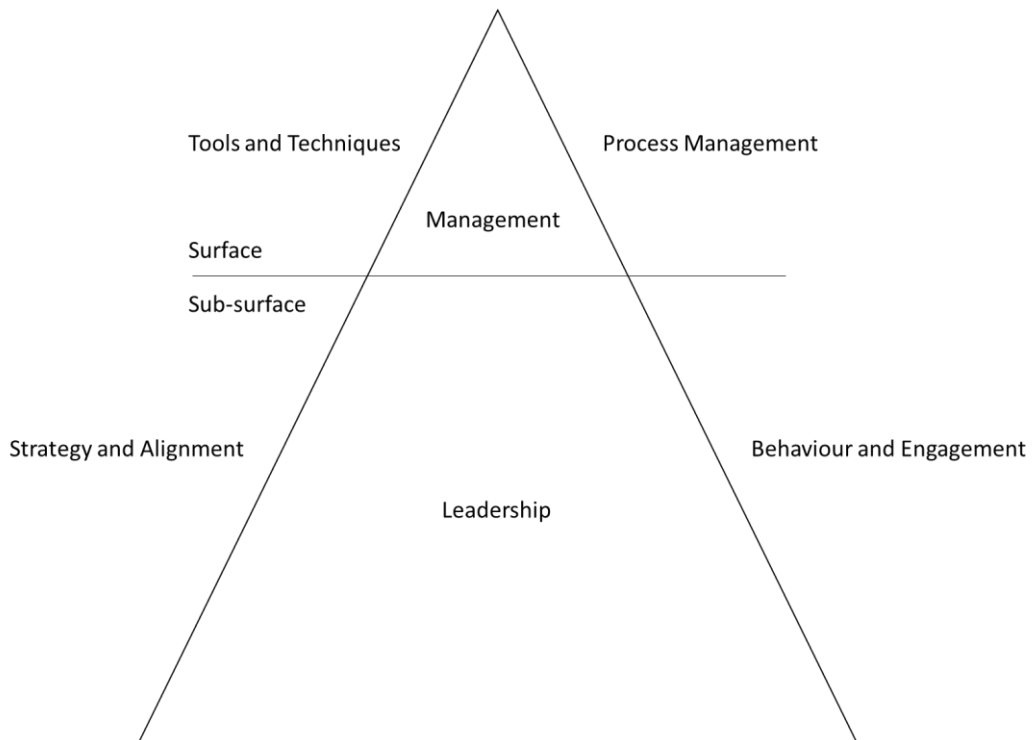
1.1.1 Operating in a Lean environment

Lean principles operate within two main environments. There is the **surface environment**, where implementation of Lean is visible to managers and employees. These are the techniques and process management tools of Lean such as **Policy Deployment** (cascading of Objectives), **Problem Solving tools** (such as DMAIC), **Daily, Weekly, Monthly Routines** (DWMs), and **Standard Work** achieved through effective training interventions. The other environment, **the sub-surface environment**, is far less tangible and is concerned with leadership, behaviours, values and engagement. The Lean environment is illustrated using a variation of the iceberg model:

The Lean Environment-

(Ice-berg Model)

Hines





1.1.2 Capability Change

Change capability is the ability of the organisation to plan, design and implement all types of change efficiently with committed stakeholders; causing minimal negative impacts on people and operations, so that desired business and cultural [outcomes] from change are consistently achieved and integrated [sustainably] and seamlessly into operations to deliver maximum ROI. Sanborn

Capability Change teams are the means by which strategic projects are supported; they are the portal for organisational change.

Common characteristics of such teams are they:

- facilitate a change environment through engagement
- rely on project management
- promote training and development

The **purpose of a Capability Change team** is to help create an attitude of and expectation for continuous improvement throughout the whole organisation.

1.1.3 Change Teams

Capability Change teams normally operate at a strategic level within the company, controlled centrally and drawing on other resources as required. Teams can be formed at a lower level within the organisation. However, this can cause conflict of roles as members of a Capability Change team should be outside the local management structure (due to the nature of the team's change role).

By establishing and maintaining the framework for continuous improvement, Capability Change teams can spread best-practice throughout the company and nurture the development of a culture of organisational learning.



Using the characteristics of a Capability Change team, start making notes on the formation of your team.	Activity
Facilitate a change environment through engagement.	
Rely on project management.	
Promote training and development.	



1.1.4 Operating in the Change environment

In most organisations the management of change and transition is a core activity in the achievement of operational objectives and growth, whether it is the relatively 'light touch' or a more radical transformation. Significant shifts in the political, economic, social, and technological environments mean that organisations need to increase their capability to respond creatively to new challenges and ways of working.

Whether the change processes are unplanned and ad-hoc, planned and strategic, or incremental or dynamic, they have profound implications for workplace management and development. Change of any sort evokes the need for innovation, creativity, learning and *culture change*, all of which lie within the sphere of individual and team development.

Managers are key stakeholders in the delivery of change in such matters as the allocation of supporting resources, provision of learning and development opportunities, reward structures and the development of employee relations.

Managers at a senior level need to demonstrate the contribution they can make in helping people to:

- recognise and interpret the relationship between organisational vision and perceived capability.
- mobilise processes that enable change processes at the appropriate level for the requirements of the organisation.
- promote the new Standard.

The purpose of promoting the new Standard is to foster *buy in*. People who have bought in to the new Standard will anticipate, and have a better understanding of, the issues that will inevitably arise during the transition.



1.1.5 Limitations of the standard approach to change

Change starts at the top. Being further up the management ladder does not come with a magic skills-set of being able to arrive at all the best ideas. However, that is often the mind-set. *Those closest to the work and the systems shaping the work are equally as likely to have good ideas.*

A top-down approach management culture can make it uncomfortable to speak truth to authority (or power). By the time a good idea is listened to the opportunity may well have passed by. A **transformational approach** may be preferred as **organic change is more likely to succeed, not least because the desire, the will, the passion is already theirs.**

Change is rolled out. ‘Here we go, yet another project’ is a common enough reaction to change that has not considered or consulted with all those involved. A change programme that is rolled out, or imposed, will meet resistance. A more socially constructed plan, where a framework is put in place, **and owners operate according to their own plan for change** is an effective alternative approach.

Change is engineered. An extension of rolling out change is to attempt to engineer it to too much detail. This transactional approach assumes change can be prescribed and the environment controlled. *A more transformational approach is more inclusive, flexible, and potentially more radical. A change platform shares the characteristics of a transformational approach to management.*



Activity 1.1 Initial Appreciation

Initial appreciation of the change environment. Potential:	Activity
Barriers:	
Opportunities:	



1.2 Strategy and Alignment

Strategy is the approach adopted for planning and operations. There are a number of strategies to adopt, ranging from ad-hoc, laissez faire through to planned and tightly controlled. The strategy might be aggressive, defensive or consolidating. The work environment and preparedness of stakeholders will dictate where on the scale strategy sits.

Alignment is how the strategy and its Objectives are cascaded throughout the organisation. **Policy Deployment** is the vehicle for alignment that PAM 3 utilises (and is covered later in this section). However, the Policy Deployment vehicle needs a route map- Plan, Do, Check, Act.

1.2.1 Plan Do Check Act

The various functions of strategy are expressed through distinct phases: **Plan, Do, Check and Act (PDCA)**. Workplace activities should be part of a '**Plan**'. A good plan orientates everyone to the task in hand and ensures all necessary structures are in place. Once all the structures are in place a pilot is implemented, this is the '**Do**' phase. Of course, any plan will need to be monitored and changes made where necessary; to *modify the plan*. This is the '**Check** phase'. The final phase of the strategy is '**Act**', where the plan is implemented in full. 'Act' is not really the final phase, but a platform to starting the process over. Thereby, maintaining a process of Continuous Improvement.

Plan Do Check Act is a useful framework within which to formulate your ideas for the future. A main characteristic of PDCA is that it is a continuous cycle that can be applied at any workplace. The **benefits of PDCA** include the establishment and maintenance of helpful routines, a framework for planning and efficiency of effort

There is a stage before PDCA where you identify what the desired outcome is. If the desired outcome has not been identified and agreed, the plan can be predicted to fail. It is also a good idea to be **SMARTER** about the desired outcome or objective by ensuring it is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Ethical and Recorded. A plan can then be developed from firm foundations.

The size and level of detail of the **Plan** will be influenced by a range of factors such as, for example, reactions to change, time available, resources, knowledge of the workplace environment and its various functions. You would have heard of the basis of any plan: What, Why, Where, When, Who and How. (And *what if*, contingency planning).



The plan is executed as a series of phases and in a controlled manner as you and your team **Do** the actions. The capacity of the team to Do the actions would have been considered previously when SMARTER was applied.

In order to ensure the plan remains on course and is performing as anticipated, it is essential to **Check** Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and other results.

Once you and the team are satisfied the next step is to **ACT**; that is to **standardise and improve** the process within and across shifts.

1.2.2 Plan

The size of the task requires either a detailed, product-based plan or a less-detailed and looser plan. The plan may be contained in documents, spreadsheets, other software such as Microsoft Project, post-its or whiteboard etc. Whichever way the plan is formed, it is essential the plan is communicated to those involved.

The communication of the plan should include information on:

- The Objective/s
- Who owns certain parts of the plan
- The schedule
- Tolerances (What lies within scope, and what falls outside)
- Reporting



1.2.3 Do

The plan will result in activity at the workplace. This will involve individuals and teams doing what the plan has set out to be done. Each individual and team should be given agreed SMARTER Objectives (see PAM 1) to ensure effort remains aligned and focused.

1.2.4 Check

Throughout the workplace activities, and at specified times within the schedule of the plan, data analysis should take place so that results can be measured in accordance with the intentions of the plan. How to measure trends and improvements is visited at Section 3 and is concerned with data collection and analysis.

1.2.5 Act

The 'Doing' and 'Checking' will require the plan to be adjusted. So long as adjustments stay within tolerances, that can be considered an utterly normal and predictable part of the process. Even where events fall outside of the parameters that have been agreed, a strategic level decision may exercise the choice of shifting those parameters.

Here, however, lies the danger of 'group think' (Janis) and mission creep, which in turn may lead to unintended consequences and added costs. Therefore, any decision to continue with parts of a plan, *or the plan itself*, should it fall outside of previously agreed tolerances, should be taken with caution.

Having adjusted the plan accordingly, the company is to 'Act' on the new insights gained. Acting will necessarily involve change at some level for all those involved (vis. 'The Change Platform'). It is at this point that PDCA can start over, with the 'Plan' element targeting a specific aspect of the Objective of the original plan.

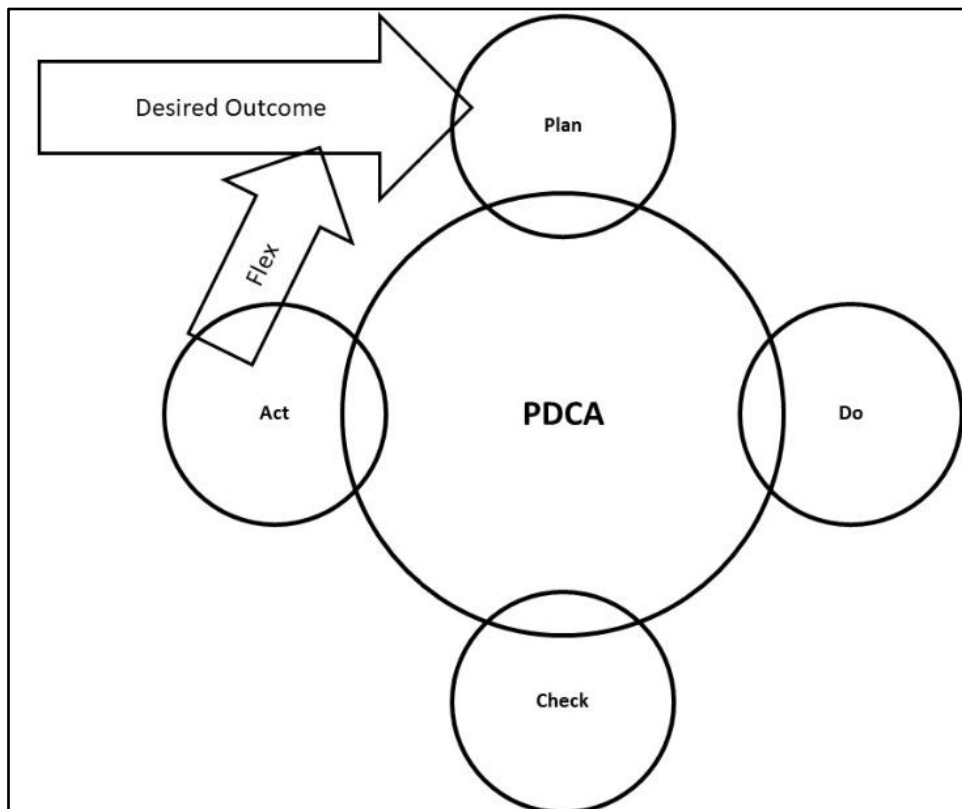


1.2.6 PDCA- Flex

Any plan should have built within it the ability to re-shape in light of events. Re-organisation does not mean a surrender of the overall objective, just a different route to it. In some circumstances it might be necessary to question the continued validity of the objective itself. Some project management models have checking the continued validity of objectives as a central theme, and a deliberate part of the plan itself.

If the objective is no longer valid, why invest time, effort, resources in it? Here may lie a dilemma. Having gone this far, having invested all this time, effort and resource at this project, the argument might be, 'we can't stop now'.

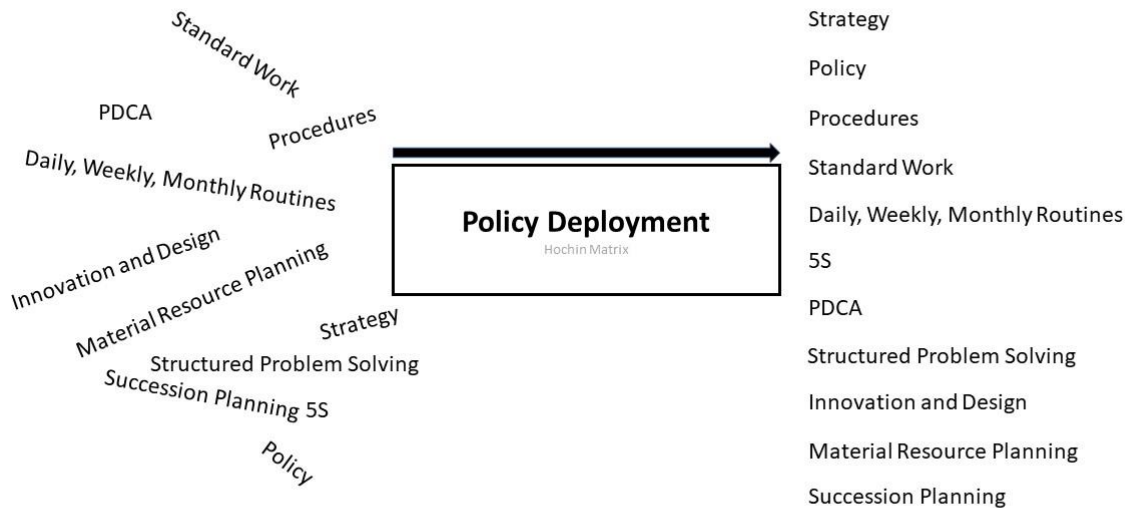
Judgement, and a management decision is required. There is a natural tension between the ability or will to flex, and strict adherence to the plan.





1.2.7 Policy Deployment

Policy Deployment, a Visual Management tool, is a Lean management process that is about the cascading of objectives throughout the company from Directors to the individual member of staff. Through Policy Deployment it is possible to see how objectives at each level are linked, often referred to as *the golden thread*. This cascading of objectives ensures activities are aligned throughout the company, resulting in increasingly effective operations. The objectives are reviewed regularly ('regularly' as defined by the company) and, in line with the principles of Continuous Improvement, updated as required.



The illustration above shows how **alignment of objectives, focus and effort** is achieved through effective Policy Deployment. Meetings held around a Management Board displaying objectives, ensures managers have sight of the direction of each of the departments in the company. This means that **priorities** can be more easily identified, and **plans agreed** in a way that builds in confidence of success, where waste is eliminated, value added and profit increased.

Furthermore, due to **increased cross-functional understanding** between managers (and everyone else involved) Policy Deployment results in a much more **effective use of resources**. Availability and priority over the use of resources ensures they are deployed by the right people, at the right time and at the right place.

Policy Deployment does have some **pitfalls, or risks**. **Lack of access** could result in managers not having sight of necessary information, further resulting in resources being used inefficiently and plans quickly



becoming obsolete. Even with all the up-to-date information being made available, a consequence of a **lack of understanding** could mean risks or opportunities are missed.

Policy Deployment has clear lines of responsibility, thereby avoiding the issue of a **lack of accountability**.

The next risk is about commitment; a **lack of commitment** is addressed through effective leadership. The final two are a **lack of a proper realisation of the consequences**, and a **lack of a sense of reality**. These two characteristics appearing in any deployment ought to raise some concern and the deployment re-considered.

Policy Deployment, team management and leadership ensure there is proper realisation of the consequences and a proper sense of reality. The result being the attainment of aligned activities.

A Policy Deployment matrix is derived from the Objectives of the next level up and so starts at the strategic level. It is, however, possible to create a Policy Deployment matrix without formal receipt of company objectives.

A manager should be able to derive their objectives from an analysis of company statements and KPIs.

<p>Part 2- Policy Deployment</p> <p>Notes on Policy Deployment:</p> <p> (Ctrl) ▾</p>	<p>Activity</p>



Activity 1.2 PDCA

<p>Part 1</p> <p>Apply PDCA by getting started with some notes:</p>	<p>Activity</p>
<p>What is the desired outcome?</p>	
<p>SMARTER Objective:</p> <p>S</p> <p>M</p> <p>A</p> <p>R</p> <p>T</p> <p>E</p> <p>R</p>	



Plan (What, Why, Where, When, Who and How)

Do (Execute in phases)

Check (Monitor performance)

Act (Standardise improvement)