

What is Continuous Improvement? Put simply, it means **'GETTING BETTER ALL THE TIME'**

A continual improvement process (CIP) is an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes.

These efforts can seek "incremental" improvement over time or "breakthrough" improvement all at once. Delivery is constantly evaluated and improved in the light of efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility.

W. Edwards Deming, a pioneer of the field, saw it as part of the 'system' whereby feedback from the process and customer were evaluated against organizational goals.

The Institute of Quality Assurance defines "continuous improvement as a gradual never-ending change which is: '... focused on increasing the effectiveness and/or efficiency of an organization to fulfil its policy and objectives. It is not limited to quality initiatives. Improvement in strategy & outcomes as well client, employee, funder, vendor or contractor relationships can be subject to continual improvement.

Kaizen

Some successful implementations use the approach known as kaizen (the translation of kai ("change") zen ("good") is "improvement").

Key features of kaizen include:

- Improvements are based on many small changes
- As the ideas come from the workers themselves, they are less likely to be radically different, and therefore easier to implement
- Small improvements are less likely to require major capital investment than major process changes
- The ideas come from the talents of the existing workforce, as opposed to using research, consultants or equipment – any of which could be very expensive
- All employees should continually be seeking ways to improve their own performance
- It helps encourage workers to take ownership for their work, and can help reinforce team working, thereby improving worker motivation.

PDCA

The PDCA (plan, do, check, act) or (plan, do, check, adjust) cycle supports continuous improvement and Kaizen. It provides a process for improvement since the early design (planning) stage of any process, system, product or service.

Origins of PDCA comes from the Shewhart cycle, often renamed Deming cycle, of PDSA. This was a far simpler notion to use and communicate than the scientific method. In fact, the PDSA notion could easily be applied to everyday life; driving a car to work. the PDSA cycle is generally easy for people to relate and buy-in.

<https://kanbanize.com/lean-management/improvement/what-is-continuous-improvement>

