

# Control Phase: Sustaining Improvements



## KEY LEARNINGS: CONTROL PHASE: SUSTAINING IMPROVEMENTS

### 1. Purpose of the Control Phase

- Ensures improvements last over time and don't fade away.
- Prevents old habits from creeping back after initial success.
  - Example: A factory introduces a new quality control system → Defects decrease, but without monitoring, they creep back up.

### 2. Why the Control Phase Matters

- Without control, improvements won't last—they need monitoring and reinforcement.
- Prevents backsliding in processes, ensuring continuous progress.
  - Example: A corporate team streamlines communication, but without regular check-ins, bottlenecks return.
  - Analogy: Like building a house—without a solid foundation, even the best designs will crumble.

### 3. Key Components of the Control Phase

The Control Phase has three essential steps:

- Step 1: Monitoring the process.
- Step 2: Documenting the improvements.
- Step 3: Building accountability.

### 4. Step 1: Monitoring the Process

- Processes need ongoing attention to ensure they function as expected.
  - Example: Baking a cake—you don't just throw it in the oven and hope; you check on it!
  - Business application: A call center monitors customer response times to maintain service quality.

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### 5. Step 2: Documenting the Improvements

- Prevents losing knowledge when employees leave or roles change.
  - Key documents to maintain: Updated SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures).
  - Training manuals for onboarding new employees.
  - Records of changes and reasons for them.
  - Examples: A factory updates its maintenance guide with new procedures.
  - An office creates a “how-to” manual for new software.

### 6. Step 3: Building Accountability

- Clear ownership ensures long-term improvement.
  - Ways to establish accountability: Assign process owners to oversee key areas.
  - Schedule regular progress reviews to track effectiveness.
  - Encourage continuous improvement within the team.
  - Examples: A call center team leader reviews customer feedback weekly.
  - A factory team meets monthly to discuss performance metrics.

### 7. Key Takeaways

- The Control Phase secures improvements by ensuring they’re maintained.
- Monitoring catches problems early before they escalate.
- Documentation preserves progress and ensures sustainability.
- Accountability keeps teams engaged and responsible for ongoing success.
- Final Thought: Without the Control Phase, all the hard work from previous steps could fade away, making this step crucial for long-term efficiency.