

Improve Phase: Brainstorming Solutions



KEY LEARNINGS: IMPROVE PHASE: BRAINSTORMING SOLUTIONS

1. Importance of the Improve Phase

- Turning analysis into action – this phase is about fixing problems permanently, not just temporarily.
- Solving problems correctly the first time prevents recurring issues.
 - Example: A factory finds that defective products are caused by poor materials → Instead of just fixing broken products, they switch suppliers or tighten quality checks.
 - Tesla faces missed deadlines due to poor communication → Instead of hoping it improves, they introduce Slack, Notion, or weekly stand-ups to streamline workflow.
- Goal: Fix it once, fix it right, fix it forever.

2. Components of the Improve Phase

The Improve Phase consists of three key steps:

Step 1: Brainstorming Solutions

- Encourages creative thinking – all ideas, even absurd ones, are welcome.
- Example: Factory overheating issue
 - Install cooling systems.
 - Redesign workflow to reduce machine usage.
 - Absurd idea: Put machines in a walk-in freezer → Might inspire a real solution!
- Example: Slow client responses in an office
 - Hire more staff.
 - Automate emails.
 - Give employees Red Bull and tell them to type faster.

Step 2: Testing Solutions (Soft Launch)

- Before full-scale implementation, test on a smaller scale.
- Example: Starbucks doesn't launch a new drink nationwide – they test it in select stores first.
- Example: Manufacturing If adding quality checks, test it on one production line first.
- Example: Office settings If introducing new project management software, test it with one department before company-wide adoption.

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Step 3: Selecting the Best Solution

- Assess solutions based on: Cost (Can we afford it?)
- Feasibility (Can we actually implement it?)
- Impact (Does it fix the problem long-term?)
- Example: Factory defect issue Switching suppliers eliminates more defects than adding quality checks → Choose supplier switch.
- Example: Office communication issues Automation reduces response times better than reorganization → Choose automation.
- Focus on what works best, not what sounds cool.

3. Key Takeaways

- The Improve Phase turns data into solutions – this is where real change happens.
- Brainstorming encourages diverse ideas, even wild ones that might lead to practical solutions.
- Testing before full implementation helps avoid costly mistakes.
- Selecting the best solution involves balancing cost, feasibility, and impact.
- Next Challenge: How do we ensure the solution keeps delivering long-term results?