

Root Cause Analysis

Root Cause Analysis occurs when the CQI team identifies the UNDERLYING or ROOT causes of the issue. When CQI teams understand what exactly is causing an issue they are more likely to develop a change strategy that will be successful in alleviating that issue.



Core Principles

Provide context

All team members have the same goals

Focus on processes not individuals

Systems thinking

Use open and honest communication

Family focus

Learn from experiences

Decisions based on data and facts

How to Perform Root Cause Analysis in 5 Steps

1

Reiterate your topic

Reiterate what you see happening, and identify the precise symptoms so that you can state or re-state your AIM statement.

2

(Re)gather data

Before you can move on to identifying the underlying root cause, you must (re)collect and evaluate all aspects of the situation.

3

Identify causal factors

Now with your data in hand, it's time to look for as many causal factors as possible that could have led to your problem.

4

Determine the root cause(s)

Use some of the root cause analysis tools in the next section to discover the root causes of each causal factor.

5

Develop change strategy

Once you know the root cause, you can develop a change strategy to ensure the problem never happens again and then develop a timeline, plan, and evaluation strategy. The tools in the next section can also be used to help you spot potential flaws in your solution before they happen.

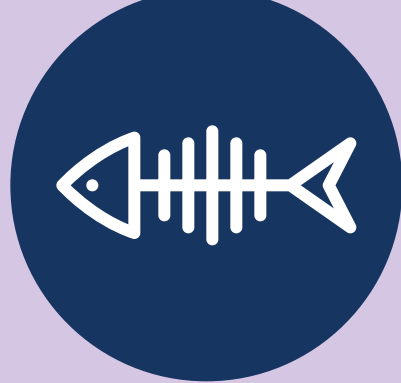
Root Causes Analysis Techniques

Here are three methodologies for conducting your own root cause analysis



5 Whys

The 5 Whys activity is to start asking "why" questions pertaining to the issue with the intention being that the CQI team works back to identifying the root cause (Refer to [PCANY tool](#) for more details).



Fishbone

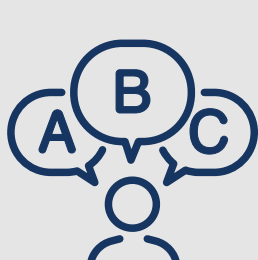
The fishbone diagram consists of multiple parts which are the head, spine, ribs, and lines. All parts in the diagram help a CQI team pinpoint where they want to target their change strategy and how to plan their PDSA cycle (Refer to [PCANY tool](#) for more details).



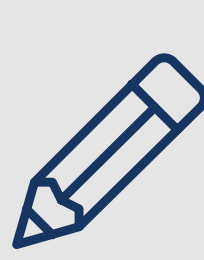
Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a group approach that is used to generate thoughts about what might be the root cause of the issue and the strategies to overcome that root cause.

Brainstorming Rules



Generate as many ideas as possible.



Record all ideas.



Encourage out-of-the-box thinking.



The smaller the test the better.



Do not judge others' ideas. No ideas are more or less important than others. No use of positions or titles in the process.



Build on ideas. Encourage team members to expand on the presented ideas and suggestions.

Developing the change strategy

While developing the change strategy CQI teams need to develop specific measures to identify if the change strategy was successful.

- Process Measures - This is done to understand how the change strategy was implemented.
- Outcome Measures - This is done to determine the results of the change plan and whether it was successful or not.
- Balancing Measures - This is used to identify if the change plan had any additional unintended consequences (e.g. delayed data entry from staff).

