

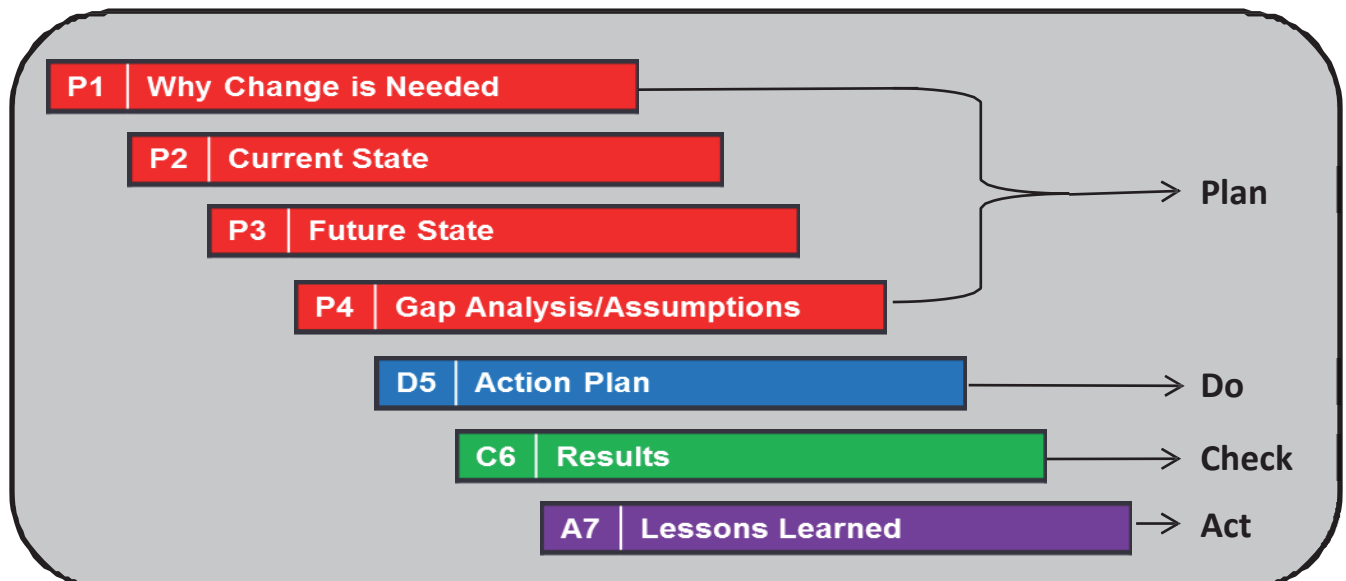
What is an A3? An **A3** is a planning tool that should be used to help plan innovations in your organization. Through a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) system of management, A3 is a primary tool and considered a standard for process improvement and innovation in California.

The A3 gets its name from the metric size of paper that's comparable to our 11x17. The A3 can be used to think through any issue, problem, or opportunity and is essential in clarifying the scope of an innovation. It's also helpful in building consensus and communicating the outcomes or improvements that result from an innovation. It's easy to start an A3, simply pull out a blank sheet of paper and create equal sized boxes with headers that follow the A3 model/structure.

Why an A3?

- Aligns to and supports PDCA system.
- Creates structure for your innovations.
- A framework for organizing thinking, work and consensus building.
- Promotes transparency of issues, problems and planning.
- Provides a visual charter of work and opportunities.
- Communication tool that follows a logical and standard structure.
- Tells the story!

A3 Components:



TITLE: _____ Team: _____

Date Started: _____ Current Date: _____ Executive Sponsor: _____ Process Owner: _____

P1 Why Change is Needed	P4 Gap Analysis/Assumptions	C6 Results																																																												
P2 Current State	D5 Action Plan																																																													
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A3 Tips:

- Planning Tool
 - Use the A3 to think through any type of opportunity or issue your team is facing.
 - The A3 is strongly recommended when planning an innovation like a rapid improvement event, a workshop, a Just Do It, or a project.
 - Metrics, metrics, metrics – Focus on outcomes and what gets better as a result of your innovation and use the A3 to document those outcomes.
- Communication Tool
 - Use the A3 to document your reasoning and your actions.
 - The 7 boxes of the A3 serve as an effective outline for presentations and formal report documents.
- Consensus Building Tool
 - Use an A3 to extract expectations from your management team to align outcomes for your innovation.
 - The A3 is helpful in facilitating discussions about a proposed innovation and ensures conversations are about the improvement, aren't personal, and aren't anecdotal.