Sustaining Improvement

The Productive Leader
Releasing time to lead™

Sustaining Improvement

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Sustaining Improvement: introduction

Sustaining Improvement is the final module in The Productive Leader. This module is typically delivered as a facilitated session, enabling you and your team to focus on developing your team improvement plan. As part of this process and using the NHS Institute's own Sustainability Model and Guide, you will consider how to sustain and spread The Productive Leader within your organisation.

Sustaining Improvement is an interactive workshop with the emphasis on your leadership team developing realistic and achievable action plans using fundamental service improvement techniques. It brings together the learning and commitments you and your team have made throughout the programme – a vital process in ensuring the opportunities within The Productive Leader are realised and sustained.
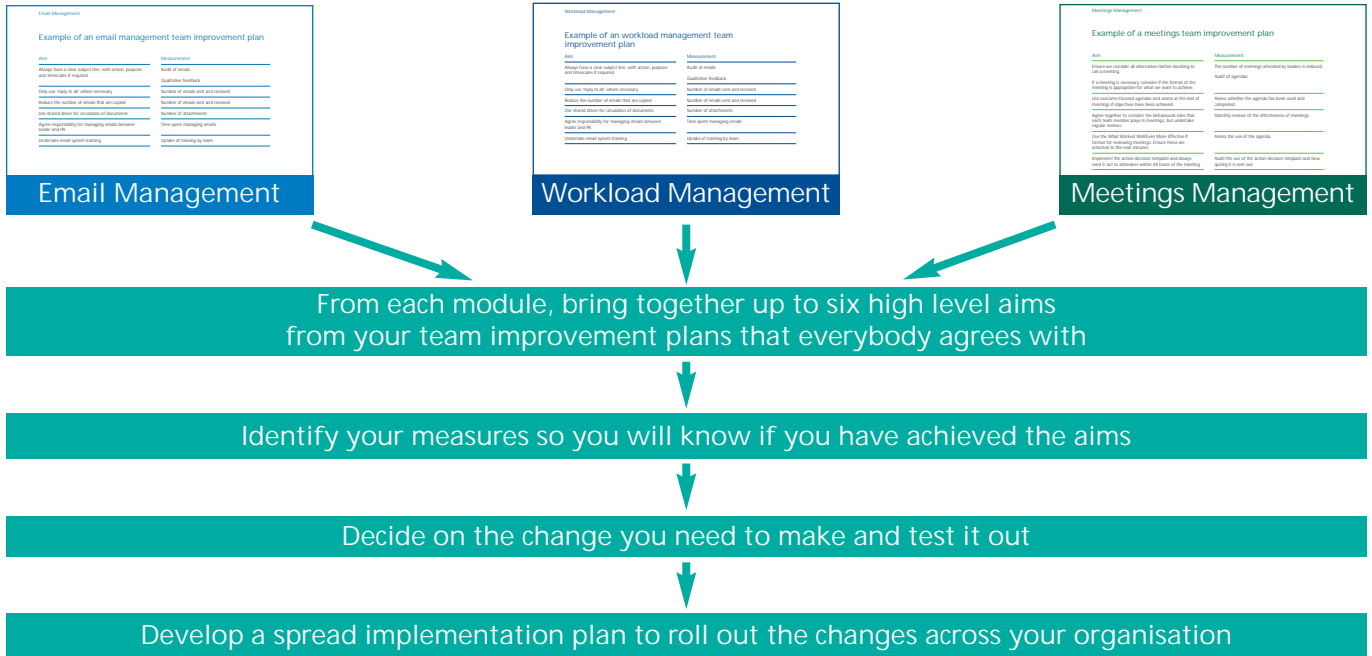
How to sustain improvement

In any situation, whether clinical or managerial, what do you need to do in order to make improvement stick and spread?

You need to:

- collectively agree a set of aims and sign everybody up to them

- identify a set of measures and work out how and when you are going to measure

- decide which actual changes you are going to test in order to achieve the aims

- agree a spread implementation plan for testing and introducing changes.

This process applies to The Productive Leader as much as it does to a clinical improvement programme. It is important that you develop your high level team improvement plan.

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Developing your team improvement plan

Email Management

Email Management

Example of an email management team improvement plan

Workload Management

Workload Management

Example of an workload management team improvement plan

Meetings Management

Meetings Management

Example of a meetings team improvement plan

From each module, bring together up to six high level aims
from your team improvement plans that everybody agrees with

Identify your measures so you will know if you have achieved the aims

Decide on the change you need to make and test it out

Develop a spread implementation plan to roll out the changes across your organisation

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31

helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk

NHS Institute

Developing a team improvement plan

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81

helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk

NHS Institute

You need to agree a set of aims that everyone will sign up to

- As a team (executive leaders and PAs) you should identify a small number of aims – no more than six – that everybody is willing to sign up to.

- The aims should cover all the aspects of The Productive Leader programme that you want to implement as a team. They should include email, meetings and workload management.

- As an individual or pair, you will have a larger number of Productive Leader aims and you should continue with these. However, the aims for the team improvement plan covers the whole team.

You need to identify a set of measures so you know whether the team aims are achieved

As a team, look at each aim and decide how you could measure it. You need to identify:
• how you will measure the aim
• whether you need to measure everything or collect a sample
• how you will collect the data
• who will be responsible for collecting the data
• how often you collect it.

Example
The executive team of a primary care trust has identified their 'top six' team aims for improvement. The first aim is to 'reduce the length of the weekly executive team meetings from four hours to three hours, while maintaining the quality of the meeting'.

For measurement, the team agreed:
• they will audit the length of executive team meetings
• the audit will be undertaken by the PA taking the actions from the meeting
• the PAs will compile a report for the executive team each month.

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Measurement: questions for you to think about

Measurement

- Are the methods of measurement useful, simple and kept to a small number?

- Have you used qualitative and quantitative methods appropriately?

- Does your success criteria accurately and reliably assess performance of the changed process/way of working?

- Can the collection of data be easily incorporated into day-to-day activities to minimise additional workload?

What gets measured
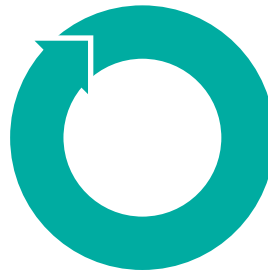
gets done

Continuous improvement

- How often do you want to review the effectiveness of your measurement process?

- Who should be responsible for continuous measurement, eg department, organisation, individual?

- What will you do to address situations where there is a risk of not sustaining improvement?

- How will you communicate the data from your successes to motivate people to sustain the change, and then take action to improve if a problem is found?

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

You need to decide which changes you are going to test in order to achieve the aims

There are many different changes that your team could implement in order to achieve the aims.

You need to select and test the changes you think will make the biggest difference.

If you are unsure whether the change will have an impact, start with a small-scale test then evaluate whether it is likely to work.

Example
Having set a collective aim that every executive team meeting should not last longer than three hours, the executive team realise the challenge will be to get through the agenda in the time allotted. In order to achieve this aim they decide to test a process where they use the timed agenda template in the Meetings Management module to keep the agenda action-focused.

To ensure the aims of the meeting are achieved within the allotted time:
• every meeting will use the timed agenda template with the percentage outcome column completed
• the executive team decide to test this for one month and then evaluate whether it helps to achieve the aim.

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

You need to agree a plan of action

• You should create an overall action plan for testing, making changes and measuring impact.

• You need to state who will be responsible for making the changes and when they will do it.

Example
Having decided to use the timed agenda, the chief executive's PA is made responsible for compiling the agenda and agreeing it 48 hours in advance with the chief executive. This is done for four weeks and during that time, the impact is monitored.

After four weeks, the length of the meetings is three and a half hours. When the report is presented to the executive team, they look at the results and realise that meetings are so long because there are a number of items on the agenda that are for information only but are presented for discussion at the meetings.

A further four-week test is implemented with the team agreeing that information items will be posted on the executive team's shared drive and not included on the agenda. When the results are next reviewed the executive team meeting lasts three hours. In addition, the team report that they feel using the timed agenda has actually improved the quality of the outputs from the meeting.

Now the team has achieved this goal, they set themselves a new target of two-and-a-half hours while maintaining the same level of quality.

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Using released time to add value

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute
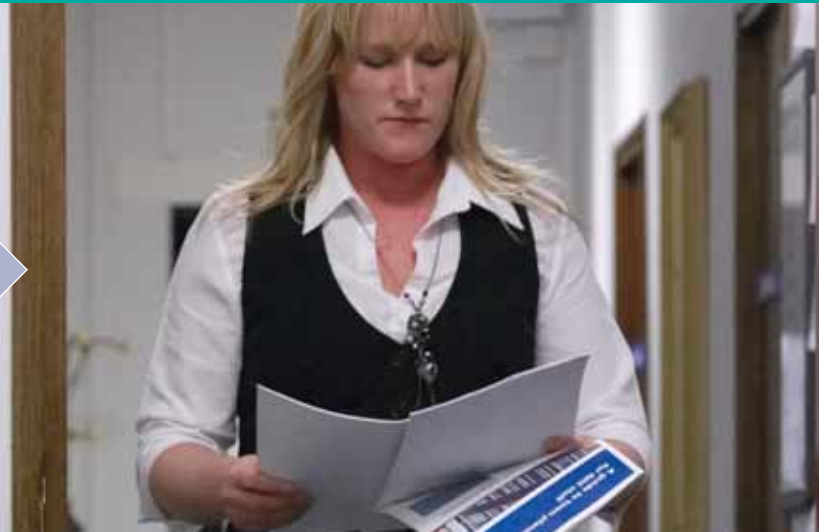
Adding value with the time you have released

If you had more time in your working day, you could have space to:

- lift up your head
- reflect
- notice what you are not looking at
- check all the spinning plates
- get clear and get others clear
- develop your key people
- network with other leaders.

Source: Trevor Waldock, School of Coaching

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Sustainability

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Sustainability questions: as a leader

What are you aiming for?

'When new ways of working and improved outcomes become the norm and have evolved and continued to improve over time.'

'Holding the gains and evolving as required – definitely not going back.'

Source: NHS Susutainability Model and Guide, NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement

Are you committed to:
• implementing your personal improvement plan and working with your PA
• implementing the team improvement plan you have developed.

Are you willing to:
• continually measure your personal performance and improve your productivity
• demonstrate your changes in working practices to your team and throughout the organisation.

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Sustainability questions: as a team

		Questions to help improve sustainability for your Productive Leader programme	
Process	Benefits	How will the new way of working improve efficiency and make jobs easier for your organisation? How will you make the benefits clear?	
	Adaptability	Can The Productive Leader be adapted to other organisational change? Is there a system for continuous improvement?	
	Evidence	How will you ensure the benefits of The Productive Leader are supported by evidence and carry credibility in your organisation?	
Staff	Monitoring	What system will you implement to monitor progress and communicate results?	
	Involvement and training	How will you involve and engage your staff with The Productive Leader? How will you ensure they are adequately trained to sustain change?	
	Behaviours	How will you empower your staff to recognise improvements from The Productive Leader will be sustained?	
Organisation	Leadership engagement	How will leaders take responsibility for efforts to sustain the changes that result from The Productive Leader?	
	Strategic fit	Is The Productive Leader aligned to your strategic aims? Is there a history of successful sustainability within your organisation?	
	Infrastructure	Are staff, facilities, equipment, job descriptions, policies, procedures and communication systems appropriate for sustaining the improved ways of working?	

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Spreading The Productive Leader

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.81
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Key principles of spreading The Productive Leader

- Be clear on why you are spreading the programme.

- Be clear on the desired impact.

- Ensure that a suitable infrastructure is in place to make it work.

- Understand what impact the programme will have on your organisation and stakeholder groups.

- Be clear on how key messages will be communicated.

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Options for spreading The Productive Leader

| Phased spread options*	Pros	Cons
By grade/level/tier	• driven by hierarchy • role models established for the organisation • lessons can be learned and action taken before spread to the next level • the initiative is given status and visibility	• the initiative could be seen as being forced on the organisation • leaders are required to uphold the right behaviours all of the time
By department/directorate	• suited to organisations where distinct department/directorate differences are evident and a tailored approach to The Productive Leader can be devised • also useful when department/directorate initiatives/change is occurring • leadership and staff engagement	• reduces likelihood of consistency across functions • role models are fewer - it relies on one or two leaders
Creating demand	• programme success drives adoption • increased buy-in for the initiative and staff engagement	• this relies on the buy-in of an area to trial the initiative • reliant on a good strategy to manage communications
By location	• this option caters for organisations that are more geographically dispersed	• lack of visibility of success and lessons learned between geographic locations

*These options can be combined

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute

Spread questions to consider

- • How many people will participate in The Productive Leader?
- • How many people will adopt the changes from the programme?
- • What is the timeframe for spread and adoption of The Productive Leader?
- • Should you adopt a big bang or drip-feed approach?
- • Are there other initiatives within the organisation that may have an impact on the timing of spread?
- • What degree of 'push versus pull' strategy is required and why?
- • How are you intending to spread The Productive Leader?
- • What communication methods (eg flyers, intranet, email) will you use to spread The Productive Leader and why?
- • What are the consequences of your approach to spreading the programme?
- • How will you measure the take-up of The Productive Leader?

Individual

Team

Organisation

Helen Elmore 92.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute
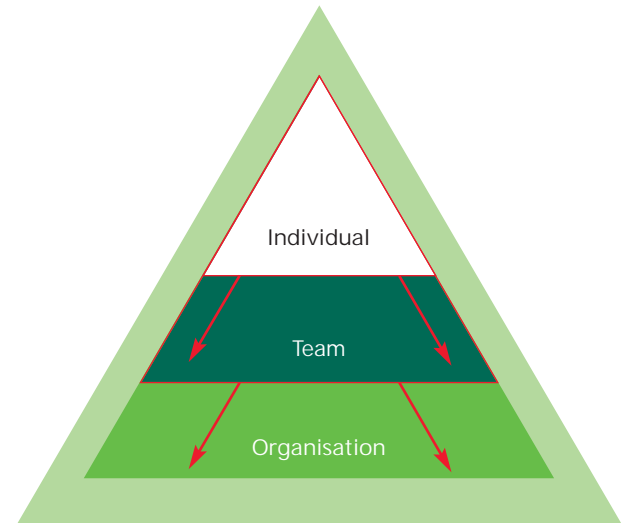
Example of a spread implementation plan – overview

Aim – to spread The Productive Leader by grade/level/tier within six months
Phase 1 – assistant directors and heads of department
Phase 2 – general managers and service managers
Phase 3 – all staff

Phase 1 plan: assistant directors and heads of department			
Action	Who	When	Complete
1. Plan a communications campaign to include: • briefing at team meeting • lunchtime briefing meeting • written briefing	Head of communications, project sponsor and project manager	To commence two weeks prior to start of programme and then monthly updates	
2. Review material and amend for this group by shortening sessions	Project manager and facilitator	Review to commence immediately after executive team completes	
3. Use already planned development sessions over a two-month period to deliver modules	Project manager and facilitator	Commence planning of sessions during review period above	
4. Review after each session and amend material for next session if required	Project manager and facilitator	After each facilitated session	

Acknowledgements

These modules have been developed by the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement in co-production with colleagues from:
• Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust
• Ealing Primary Care Trust
• Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust
• Sheffield Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
• Stockport Foundation NHS Trust.

We would also like to acknowledge the support given by Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust.

Helen Elmore 02.11.54.31
helen.elmore@institute.nhs.uk
NHS Institute