

## The Deming Cycle and Continuous Improvement

Our work in Continuous Improvement (CI) started 25 years ago. Our company was young, we were impressionable and, after some small pilot projects in Northern BC, we landed a multi-year contract to deliver Continuous Improvement projects to the Operations Division of the Ministry of Forests.

Dr. Deming loomed large in these early days of Berlineaton. His work, beliefs, principles and books guided the development of our CI methodology.

In this, our final infographic of this series, we pay tribute to W. Edwards Deming by showcasing the PDSA cycle (Plan, Do, Study, Act) and our seven principles of Continuous Improvement that have guided our work for 25 years.

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# The Principles of Continuous Improvement

**Continuous Improvement** is an operational philosophy based on the premise that performance improvement is the ongoing responsibility of everyone in an organization. Following are seven principles we have followed over 25 years.



## 1 | A focus on the customer

A product or service exists to fulfill a customer need. The customer must be built into the design of a product or service.



## 2 | A prevention approach

“Do it Right the First Time”, rather than correcting through inspection. Design processes to prevent defects.



## 3 | Management by data

Facts, not hunches, about the process and outputs must drive quality improvements.



## 4 | Commitment to ongoing improvement

Each time a goal is met, new improvement goals should be set.



## 5 | Respect for employees at all levels

Process experts are those doing the work. Trust in their decision-making abilities is central to a culture of CI.



## 6 | Cross-functional problem solving

Processes don't neatly fit into organization charts – they often run horizontally through organizations. Cross-functional teams with different skills and abilities are needed to solve end-to-end process challenges.



## 7 | Constancy of leadership commitment

This must be a way of life in an organization. Tenacious and visible commitment is needed to motivate others to make the considerable investment in change.