

Performance Improvement Glossary

Selected terms used in Kaiser Permanente's performance improvement processes

Black belt

An expert in the field of performance improvement.

Champion

Operational leader, middle manager or union representative who defines goals and objectives and establishes the scope of a performance improvement project or effort. See *Sponsor* entry.

Improvement advisor (IA)

An expert with the skills and knowledge to support and advise UBT co-leads, frontline teams and leaders in performance improvement. IAs can help identify content experts for a project and coordinate data analysis.

Lean

Tools and techniques that remove waste from a system or process to increase the efficiency, reduce the cost and improve the quality of that system, process or product.

Mentor

A performance improvement expert, usually a certified black belt in lean methodology, who provides ongoing mentoring in improvement strategy, execution and organizational change. Mentors oversee and support the work of IAs.

Performance improvement (PI)

Modifying or redesigning any part of a process, work method or management style to deliver greater value and create optimal results.

PI methodology

Tool and/or technique used to improve a workflow and outcomes.

Rapid Improvement Model (RIM)

A simple, reliable method—used in health care and other industries—that follows the plan, do, study, act steps for testing small changes for quick improvements.

SMART goal

Statement of the desired outcome of a performance improvement project. It is *specific* (clear and focused); *measurable* (results can be tracked); *attainable* (in the time frame stated); *realistic / relevant* (has a bearing on the main work of the department); and *time-bound* (has a clear deadline or time frame).

Stakeholders

Individuals or a group (department, team, union) that is affected by an improvement effort or project and should be involved in that effort to ensure all interests are considered.

Sponsor

Manager, union representative or other leader who mentors and supports UBTs' improvement efforts, removes barriers, connects them with the resources and tools necessary to do their work and models partnership behaviors.

Test of change

Trying out a new and simple approach on a small scale with the aim of improving performance.

UBT consultant (UBTC)

Someone who helps unit-based teams become high performing by using partnership and performance improvement skills.

Union partnership representative (UPR)

Similar to a UBT consultant, UPRs support the development of high-performing unit-based teams and are experts in all facets of partnership. Many UPRs are senior union leaders in their local unions and are trained facilitators well versed in performance improvement methodology.

