Dispositions of Educational Improvers

What types of mindsets and behaviors support improvement activities? There are several dispositions that will animate the work of improvement – taking a disciplined approach to making innovations work in your system. These dispositions include the inclinations, sensitivities, and abilities that seasoned educational improvers reported were critical in their development as improvers and building this capacity in others.

To learn more about these dispositions see: Biag, M., & Sherer, D. (2021). Getting better at getting better: Improvement dispositions in education. *Teachers College Record,* 123(4).

Disposition	What the Disposition Looks Like in Practice
Engage in Disciplined Inquiry	Improvers demonstrate a desire to build evidence to test initial theories (e.g., conducting PDSA cycles).
Adopt a Learning Stance	Through their actions, improvers model the ability to be open to learning, to make mistakes, and to see early ideas and initial trials as opportunities to advance one's understanding.
Take a Systems Perspective	Improvers take the time to zoom out and see the big picture when approaching a problem. They seek to see problems holistically and as a result of the design and structure of a system. They focus on identifying interconnections of key processes and refrain from identifying people as the root causes of problems.
Seek the Perspective of Others	Improvers demonstrate a strong desire to gain the perspective and learn from the experience of others in the system.
Possess an Orientation Towards Action	Improvers often need to act in the midst of uncertainty. They are willing to attempt small system changes even if ideas are imperfect and often have a high tolerance for ambiguity.
Persist Beyond Initial Improvement Attempts	Improvement journeys are rarely linear and often encounter unexpected challenges. Improvers demonstrate the confidence that improvement is possible, and the willingness to devote adequate time to solving complex problems.

Adapted from Biag, M., & Sherer, D. (2021). Getting better at getting better: Improvement dispositions in education. *Teachers College Record, 123*(4).

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