How do we choose the focus of our PDSA?

Use the table below to assist your team in choosing a focus for your upcoming PDSA cycle. This sheet may be helpful to your team if:

1. Your team uncovered several issues that could be the focus of a PDSA cycle, but your team doesn't know which one to choose.

2. Team members have differing opinions about what focus would be most effective between 2-3 identified options.

Theme	Questions to Ask:	Rationale:
Degree of belief	Does our team have a high, medium, or low degree of belief that this change idea will lead to an improvement? Try this activity: Turn & Learn (Brown, 2018) Everyone independently jot their answer to the following question down on a piece of paper. "On a scale from 1 (low belief) to 5 (high belief), what is your degree of belief that this change idea will lead to an improvement?" Once everyone has written down their ranking in private, count to three, and show answers simultaneously. Have each person briefly share why they choose their score.	Most or all team members rating their degree of belief as medium to high indicates a good potential PDSA focus.
Past Experiences	Has this change idea been tried before?	If tried and failed, less likely to succeed. If tried and succeeded, build on wisdom of prior attempts but consider why gains were not sustained.
Cost of Failure	What is the cost (e.g. time, resources, energy) of this change not working?	If cost of failure is small, it is a better focus for a first test.
Commitment	What is the level of commitment of team members to implementing this change? Try this activity: Turn & Learn (Brown, 2018) See directions above. "On a scale from 1 (low commitment) to 5 (high commitment), what is your commitment to implementing this change?"	Medium to high commitment for most or all team members indicate a good potential PDSA focus.
Compatibility	Is this change compatible with our existing values, experiences, needs?	Medium to high compatibility will be easier to implement.
Complexity	Is this change complex or simple?	Simpler changes will be easier to implement.
Relative Advantage	Is this change better than the status quo (i.e. changing nothing)?	If not, then look for a different change focus.
Observability	Are the results of the change easily observable?	Observable changes create buy-in and make measurement easier.

References:
Brown, B. (2018). Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough conversations. Whole hearts. Random House Publishing Group.

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