

Driving Development Through Observation

February 2026

LXP Skills
LXP Talent



Today we will ...

- Identify patterns and themes across multiple observations to inform staff development
- Use observation findings to co create realistic, supportive action plans
- Link individual feedback to organisational quality improvement priorities



Who am I?

Hollie Barnes-Lomax

- Lover of creating spaces and resources for **all** teachers and students/apprentices to collaborate, learn & thrive!
- Teaching and Learning Excellence Manager at FE college
- Teacher Training lecturer (L3 AET/L5 DiT/PGCE)
- Deputy Chair for SFEC Committee at English Association
- Education Quality and Standards board member for ETF

Let's get started...



Think about the last few observations you completed.

What did you actually do with the findings afterwards?

Pop an answer in the chat box

Keep Thinking...



What normally gets in the way of observations driving real development?

Pop an answer in the chat box

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“Effective professional development requires **sustained support, feedback, and opportunities to practice.**”

Education Endowment Foundation (n.d)

Turning observation into real development

- Report and Share
- Feedback
- Team level discussions
- CPD planning
- Quality Improvement
- Strategic alignment
- Follow up - Impact



Identify patterns and themes

Over to you...

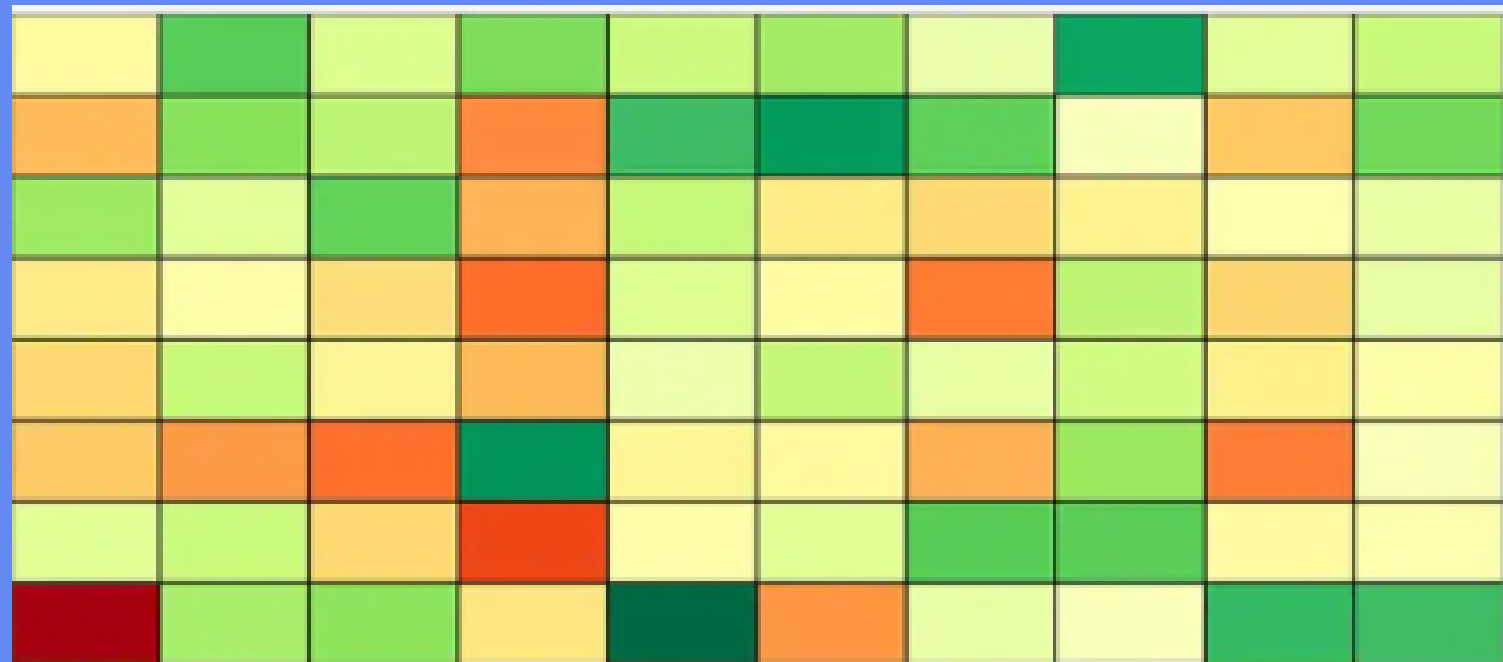


How do you currently identify patterns/trends in practice within observations?

Pop an answer in the chat.

Why patterns matter

Looking across observations helps us identify:



- Repeating strengths
- Repeating development themes
- Root causes not just symptoms
- System level barriers

Strong improvement focuses on causes, not just practice snapshots.

Thinking back....a reminder...

Good TLA **looks different in each curriculum** because learning is different work in different subjects.



Level/Theme Thinking



- Level 1 – Surface Practice
- Level 2 – Pedagogical Understanding
- Level 3 – System Drivers

Common themes seen across multiple observations



Common Strengths

- Strong relationships and positive learning environments
- Clear vocational relevance and contextualisation
- Good use of professional and industry knowledge
- Supportive coaching style with learners
- Clear modelling of practical skills
- Strong employer or workplace links (ITP)
- Good use of digital platforms and resources.

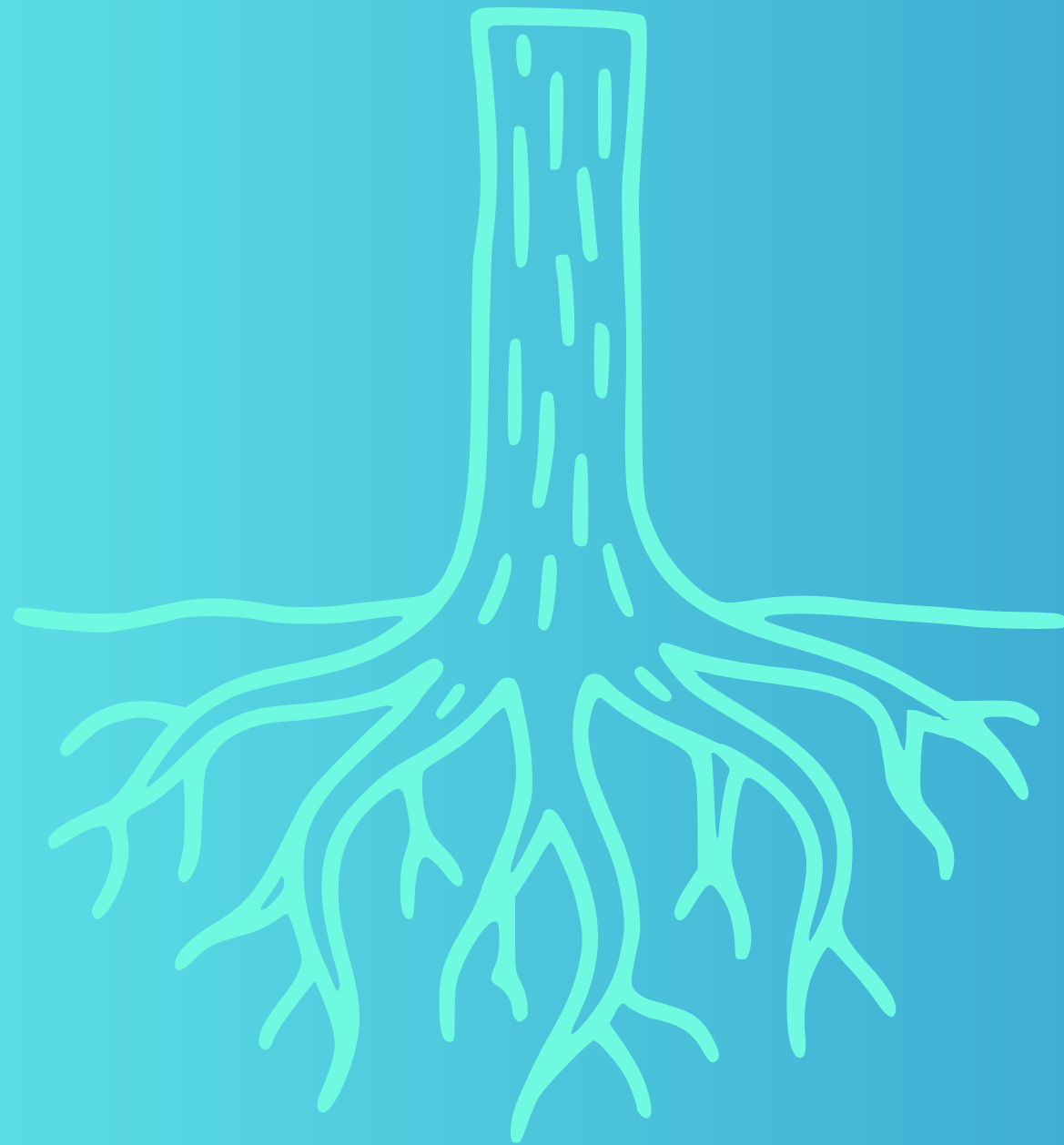
Hollie Barnes-Lomax

Common Areas for Development:

- Limited learner participation in theory input
- Questioning checks recall more than thinking
- Inconsistent checking for understanding across all learners
- Differentiation often reactive rather than planned
- English and maths not consistently embedded
- Limited stretch for higher prior attainers
- Feedback given but not always acted on by learners
- Over reliance on slides or verbal delivery in knowledge sessions

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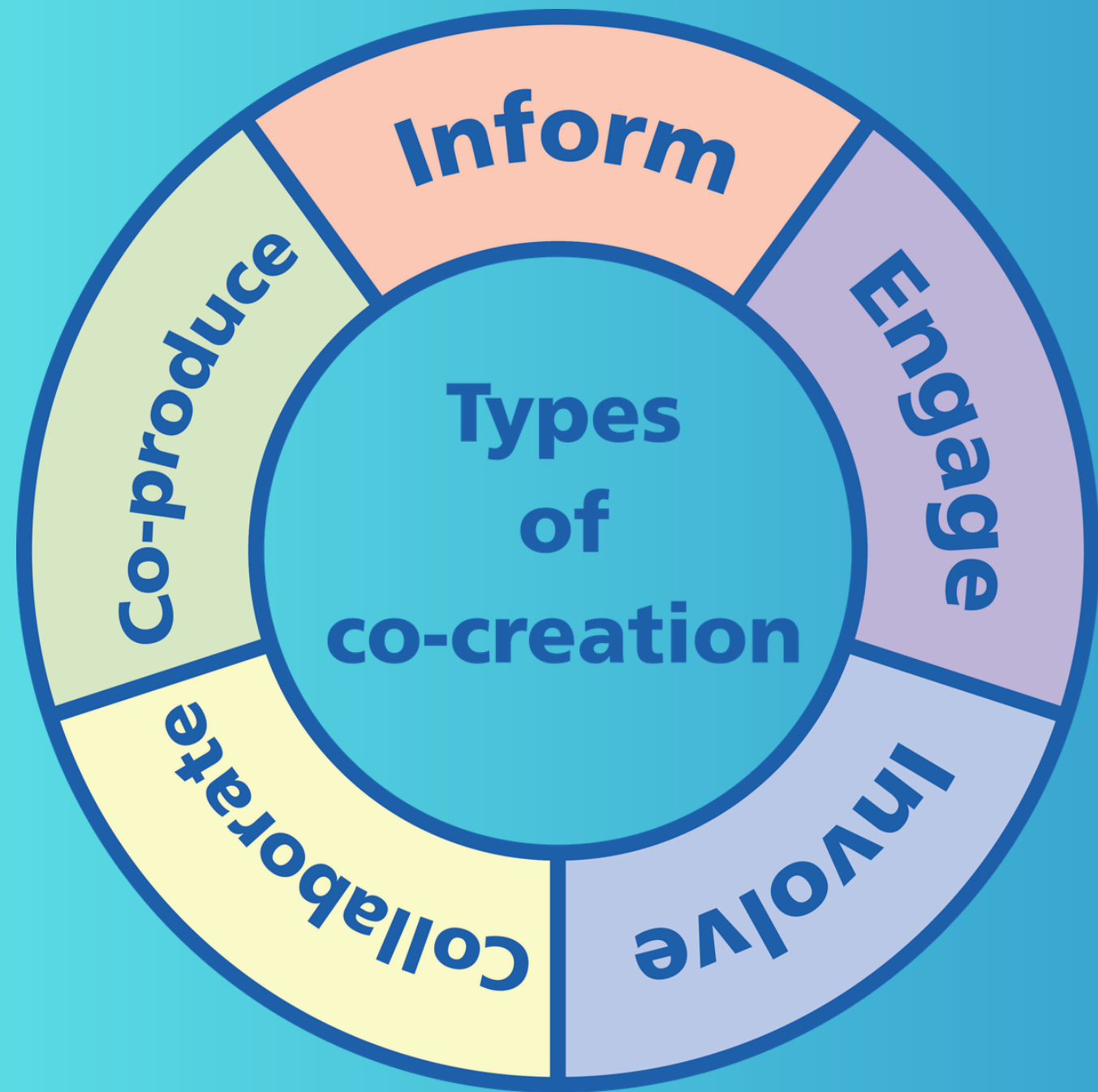
(Typical) Root causes



- Curriculum content volume limits active learning design
- Time pressure reduces planning depth
- CPD not always focused on specific classroom practice
- Confidence varies in applying pedagogy in vocational or workplace contexts
- Observation culture historically focused on performance rather than development
- Delivery models (reviews, OTJ, workplace visits) shape teaching approach

Use observation findings

Co-created development



- Start with shared understanding
- Balance strengths and development
- Explore the why
- Agree small, realistic practice changes
- Agree support and follow Up

Using coaching conversations



Coaching conversations help move feedback from telling to professional thinking, ownership and sustained improvement.

They create space for practitioners to:

- Reflect on their own practice
- Explore what is influencing performance
- Identify realistic changes
- Commit to testing new approaches

Coaching Models

- GROW Model
- Instructional Coaching
- WOOP

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“Teachers improve **by changing what they do, not by changing what they know.**”

(Williams, 2016)

Why action plans can fail

- Too vague
- Too big
- Not owned
- Not revisited

Effective plans change behaviour quickly and visibly.



Co-create development focus

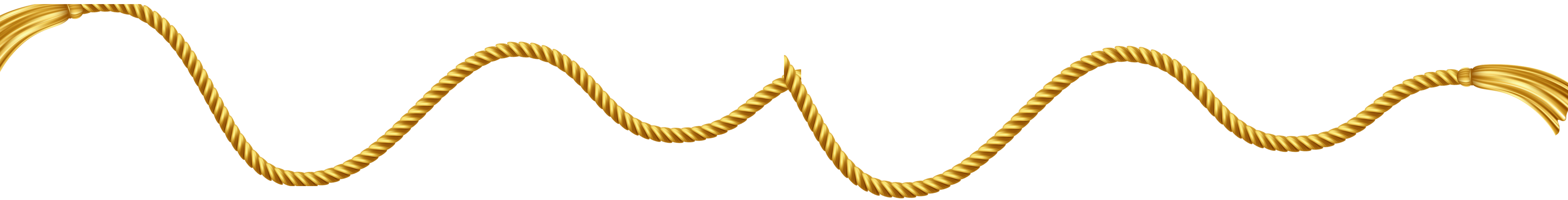
Work with staff to agree:

- What strong practice should be sustained and shared
- What specific practice should be developed
- What small changes could be trialled quickly



Individual Feedback to Organisational Improvement

The Golden Thread





How observation feeds organisational improvement

- Individual Practice
-
- Team Development
- Curriculum and Delivery Design
- Quality Improvement Planning
- Strategic Decision Making
- Culture

Over to you...



Here is a theme identified as an area for development:

Learners struggle with technical vocabulary

How could you map it to one of the following:

- Team CPD
- Curriculum Review
- Resources
- QIP
- Learner Outcomes

Pop an answer in the chat.



Impact

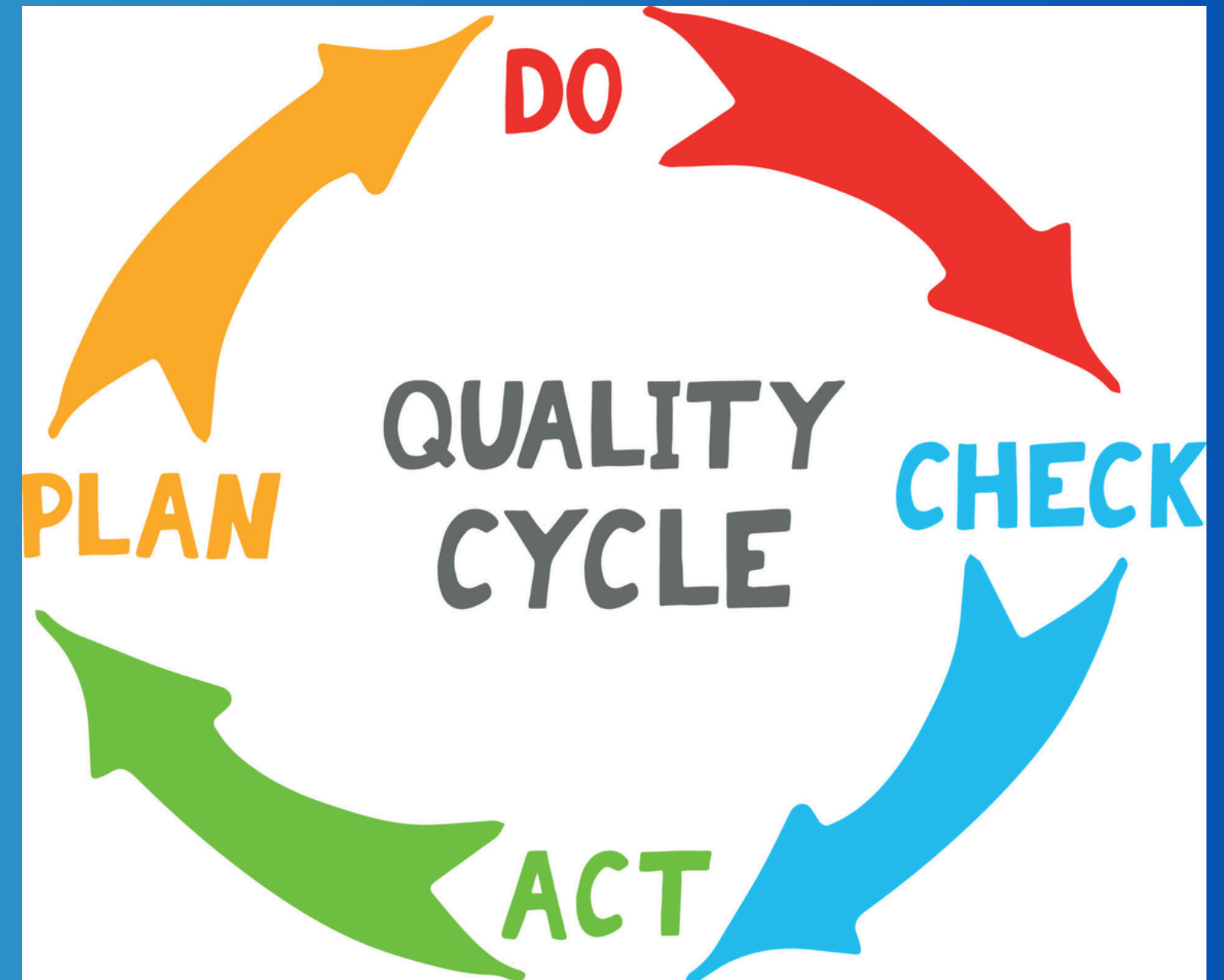
Measuring impact

What should we be following up on?

- Practice changes
- Learner/ Apps experience
- Progress and outcomes
- Consistency (across provision)

Key Takeaways

- Observations must drive action, not just documentation
- Pattern finding turns feedback into organisational intelligence
- Co-created development leads to sustained change



Pause and Reflect

How can you make sure your next observation feeds into team learning, CPD or quality improvement cycles?

Pop an answer in the chat

**Thank you for your
time**

Stay in touch

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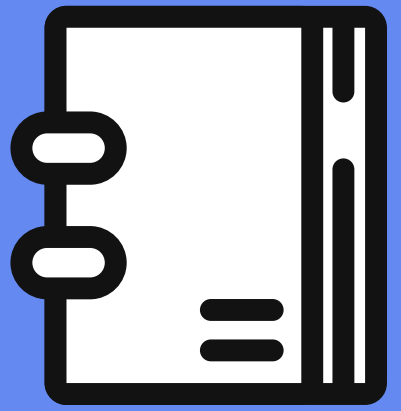


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<https://lxpskills.co.uk>

References and Further Reading



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