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# HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

## A MANAGER'S GUIDE



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# INTRODUCTION

A health and safety management system can be utilised to help manage health and safety in an organisation.

Most health and safety or environmental management systems are based around the principle of 'Plan, Do,

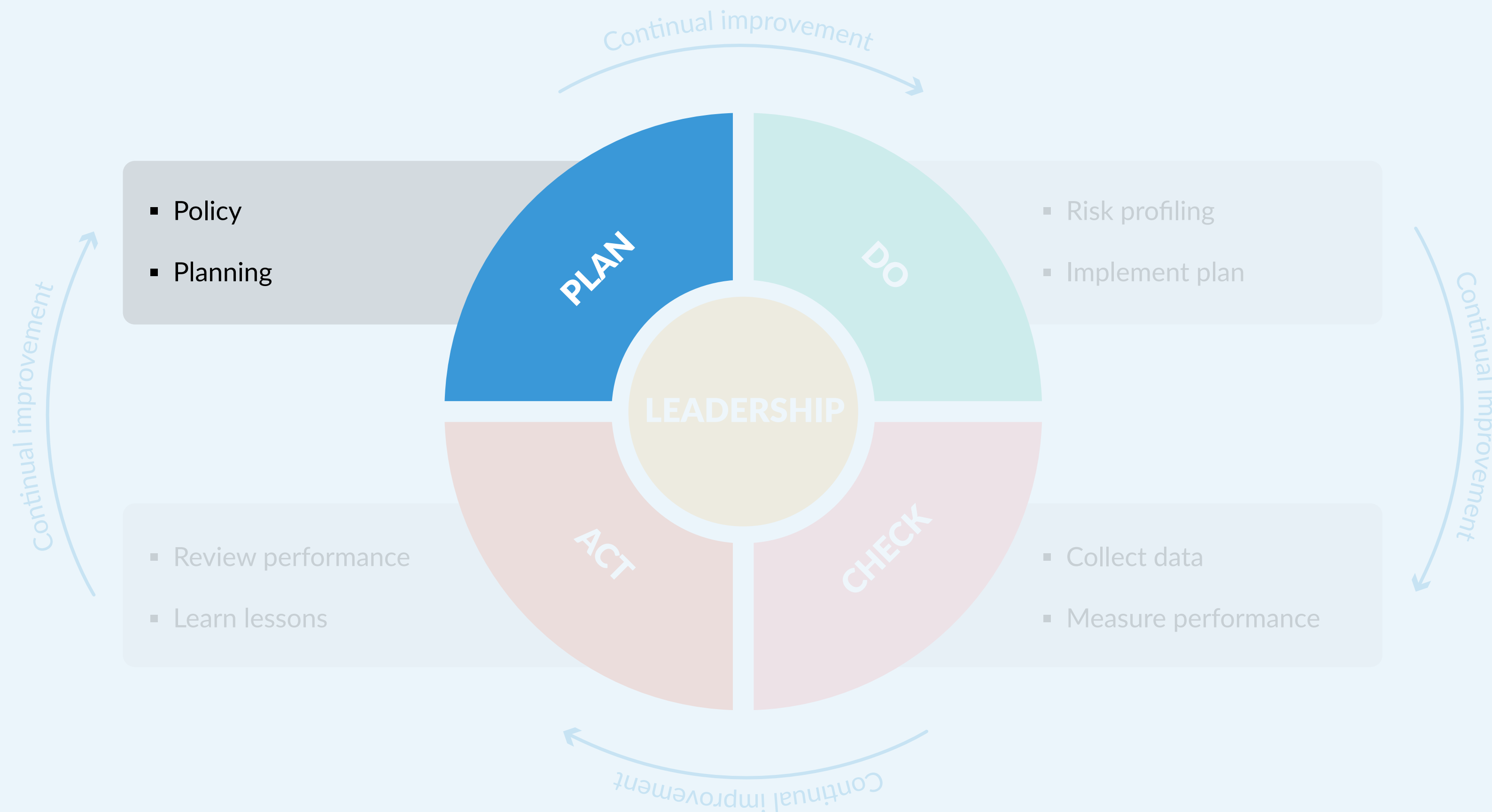
Check and Act' – also known as the Deming Cycle or Shewhart Cycle.

This guide will go through each section in turn and explain the numerous benefits of implementing such a system.



**KATE GARDNER**

Health and Safety Trainer,  
International Workplace



# PLAN

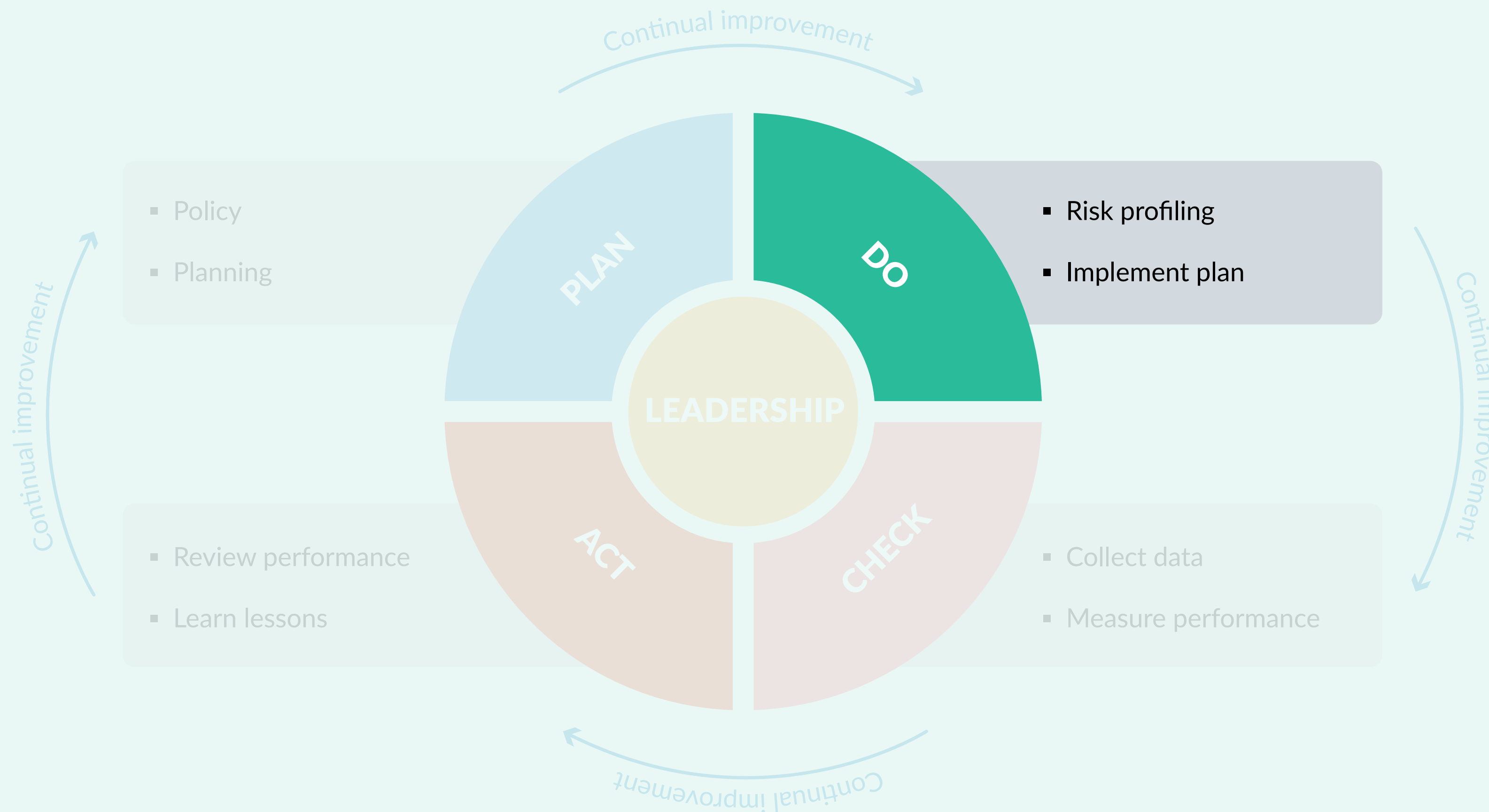
This stage requires management to identify their objectives, understand their current situation, set targets, consider tasks, timing, cost and roles and communicate it with all relevant parties.

## Policy

The first key element of a health and safety management system is a policy. A safety policy outlines the responsibilities of staff at all levels and describes the health and safety systems and procedural arrangements that exist to ensure that hazards are reduced to an acceptable level.

## Planning

Planning – or organising – concerns the overall management arrangements for health and safety, together with formal procedures that mean that health and safety requirements can be implemented. Planning should take into account both day-to-day activities, and abnormal events, such as emergencies.



# DO

This section deals with the implementation of the plan. Management need to focus on how they communicate, monitor and make adjustments as they go along.

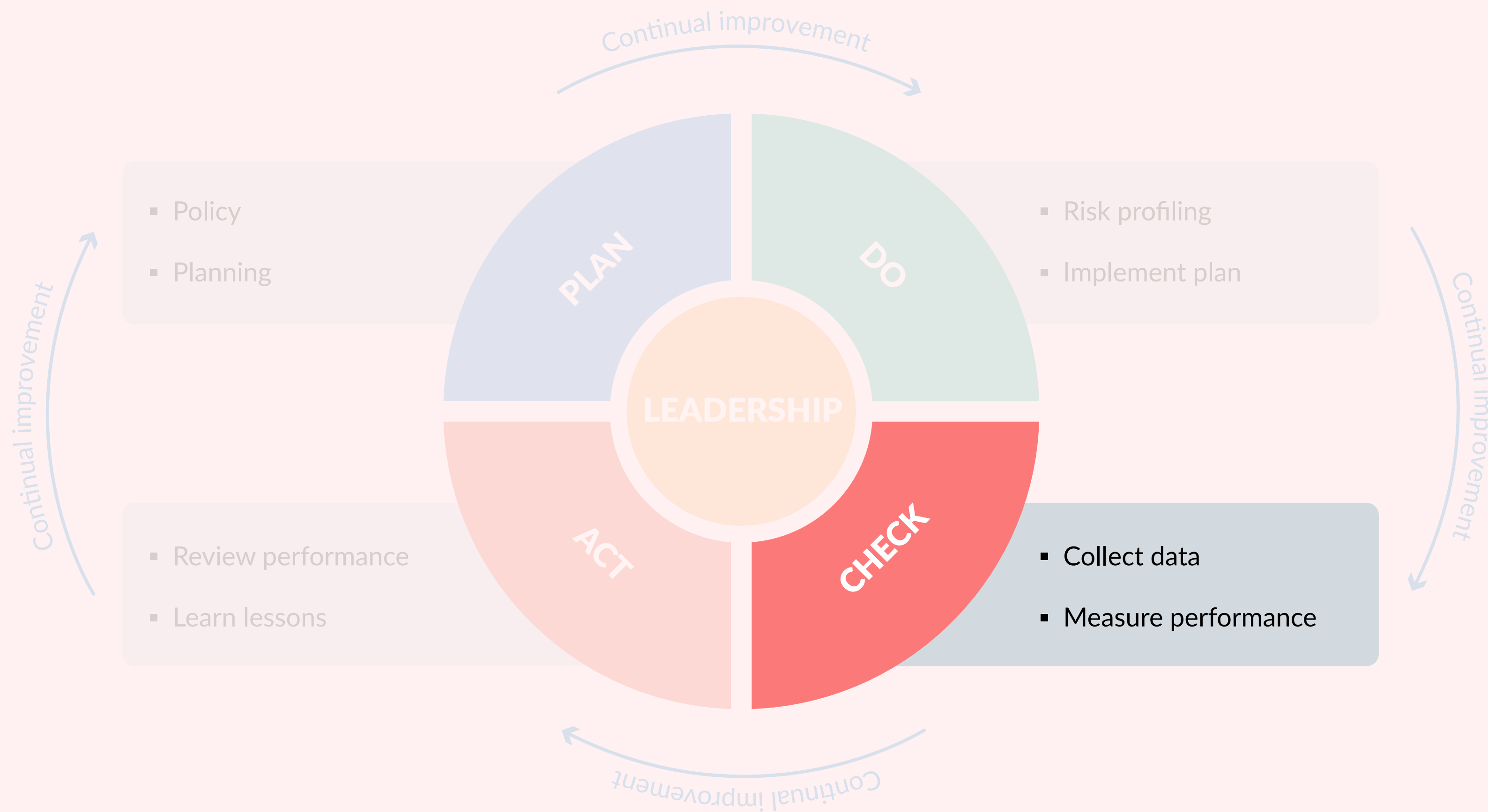
## Risk profiling

A risk profile examines:

- The nature and level of the threats faced by an organisation (depending on its size, its people and its activities).
- The likelihood of adverse effects occurring.
- The level of disruption and costs associated with each type of risk
- The effectiveness of controls in place to manage those risks.

## Implement plan

An employer must be able to demonstrate that health and safety requirements are being met. To help with this, they must decide on the preventive and protective measures that are needed and put them in place, provide the right tools and equipment to do the job, and keep them maintained, and ensure everyone is competent (and trained and instructed) to carry out their work.



# CHECK

This is the review phase where management need to measure performance against their initial objectives. The key point is to evaluate progress by identifying what went well and what needs to be improved.

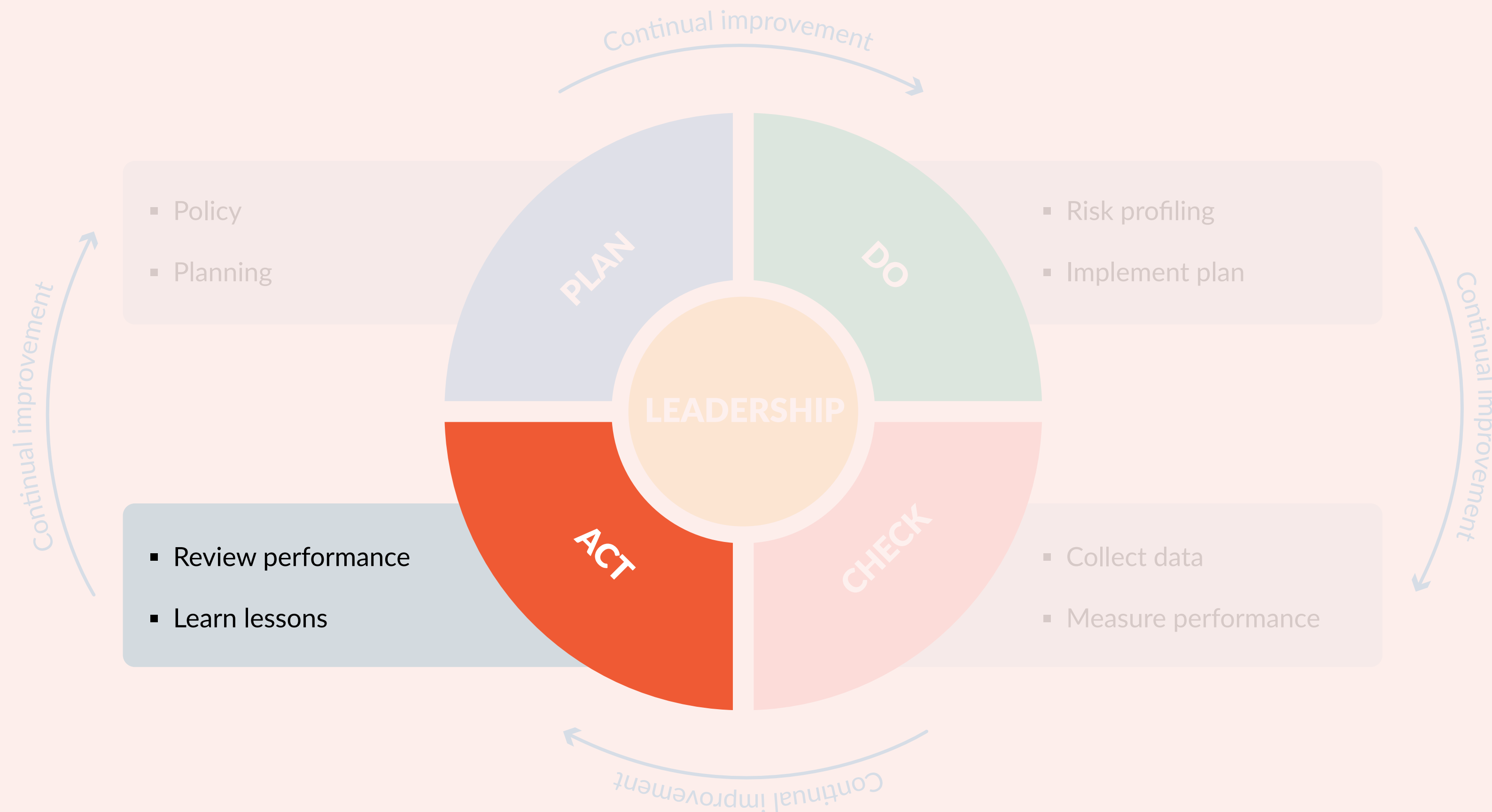
## Collect data

Your organisation needs to understand how well it is performing in terms of health and safety. As a manager, you also to need understand how well you and your team are implementing your organisation's health and safety arrangements.

## Measure performance

Once you have collected this sort of data, this will give you an indication as to whether the actions you have implemented in your plan are working, and make adjustments as necessary.





# ACT

This is an action stage. At this stage, management get an idea of what improvements are required to make their system successful. They need to determine how this will happen and develop an action plan that will form the start of next PDCA cycle.

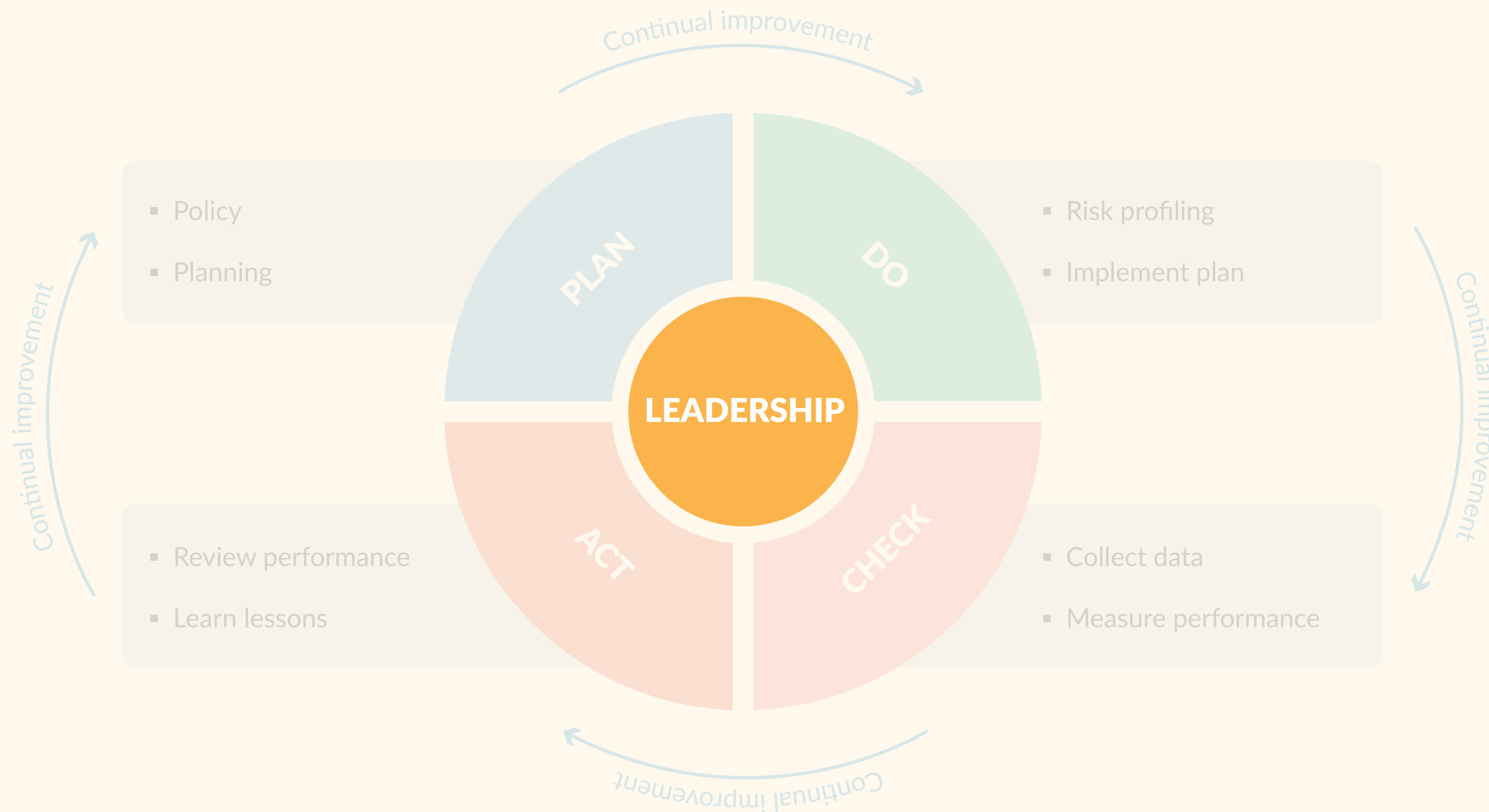
## Review performance

Health and safety performance should be regularly reviewed by the organisation as a whole.

## Learn lessons

Learning through experience is a vital lesson in life. Learning from health and safety incidents will hopefully lead to a safer workplace and more effective safety management.

# WHY LEADERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL



The Plan – Do – Check – Act cycle puts leadership at the heart of the process, and makes it clear that, without strong leadership, all other aspects of the system will fail. To be successful, your health and safety management system needs to match your organisation's goals and approach, so it fully integrates into your company culture.

It's important to be aware of your responsibilities and duties, under law and in general, to help ensure you are compliant and accountable for your actions.

Assessing risk is important, and reducing risks to the lowest 'reasonably practicable' level is an essential part of managing health and safety.

Involving everyone in the process will help ensure health and safety is firmly embedded in your organisation's culture, and strong leadership will drive worker engagement.

# THE BENEFITS

There are numerous benefits to implementing a health and safety management system.



## Complying with legislative and other requirements

Complying with the law should be the minimum aspiration for managing safety and health. Depending on their core goals, organisations may strive for higher standards, which in turn will influence the way they develop the elements of their management system. Implementing a health and safety management system helps to identify relevant statutory requirements and creates processes for ensuring compliance.



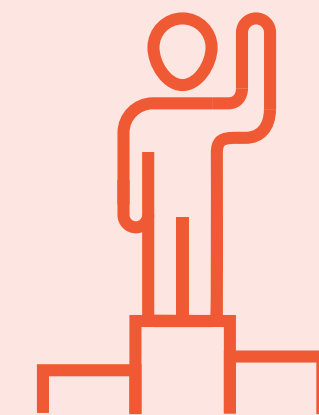
## Helping to deliver the policy

Worker participation helps to engage the workforce in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy working conditions, and a health and safety policy is an effective means of delivering the message. The policy should consist of a statement of intent, an outline of roles and responsibilities, and arrangements for dealing with safety and health issues.



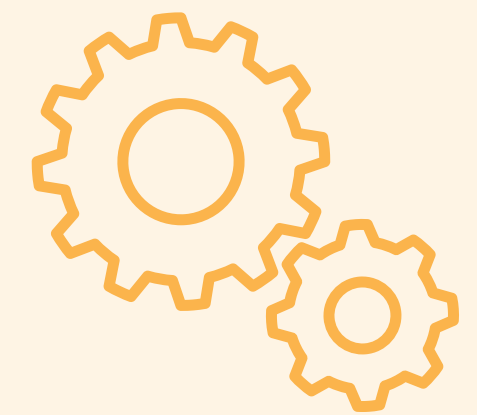
## Enabling improved management of safety and health risks

A health and safety management system helps allocate appropriate resources to achieve effectiveness and efficiency, and focuses management's minds on safe working practices. Adopting a proactive rather than reactive approach allows for hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control, rather than dealing with accidents and incidents.



## Improving competitive edge

Many companies now require their suppliers and partners to demonstrate certain standards of health and safety management performance before doing business with them. If your business doesn't come up to standard with others' expectations, it could miss out on contracts and opportunities. Conversely, if you have a strong reputation for safety management, your business will have the edge over competitors.



## Providing synergy with good business management

There are many other operational issues that are managed through the application of health and safety management systems. In addition, managing health and safety through a well-designed management system treats safety and health in the same way as other business risks.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

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- > A health and safety management system can help you manage health and safety in your organisation.
- > Implementing a health and safety management system helps to identify relevant statutory requirements and creates processes for ensuring compliance.
- > Worker participation helps to engage the workforce in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy working conditions, and a health and safety policy is an effective means of delivering the message.
- > A health and safety management system helps allocate appropriate resources to achieve effectiveness and efficiency, and focuses management's minds on safe working practices.
- > If you have a strong reputation for safety management, your business will have the edge over competitors.
- > Managing health and safety through a well-designed management system treats safety and health in the same way as other business risks.
- > To be successful, your health and safety management system needs to match your organisation's goals and approach, so it fully integrates into your company culture.
- > Involving everyone in the process will help ensure health and safety is firmly embedded in your organisation's culture, and strong leadership will drive worker engagement.





# FURTHER READING

[HSE: Core elements for managing health and safety](#)

[HSE: Planning for implementation](#)

[HSE: Delivering effective arrangements](#)

[HSE: Leading health and safety at work](#)

## IOSH MANAGING SAFELY from International Workplace

Study online or by virtual  
classroom.

All of the content in this guide is  
taken from International Workplace's  
IOSH Managing Safely course.

The course covers:

- Basic principles of health and safety – moral, financial and legal
- Concept of safety management – using the Plan/Do/Check/Act model
- Importance of health and safety strategy, plans and objectives
- Management of occupational risk – risk profiling
- The legal framework – criminal and civil, corporate manslaughter, corporate and personal liabilities
- Enforcement arrangements
- Safety leadership – key actions a senior manager can take
- Reviewing your health and safety performance and risk management arrangements



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