



Event Summary:

Positive Deviance: The What. The How.



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Date: July 26-27, 2010

Location: Tufts University, Boston MA

Organizations involved: Positive Deviance Initiative

Summary: The PDI's most recent workshop "Positive Deviance: The What. The How." was held from July 26-27 at Tufts University in Boston. 64 brilliant participants traveled from across the U.S. (and beyond!) and came from a very diverse array of sectors including education, nutrition, healthcare, environmental conservation, business, and organizational development.

Participants attended the workshop to gain a basic understanding of the Positive Deviance concept and approach. Small group work focused on how to begin applying the approach in their own communities to diverse topics such as the childhood obesity epidemic, high school drop-out rates, prevention of healthcare associated infections, conflict resolution, and economic and political challenges in East Africa, just to name a few.

Seven facilitators co-created the workshop, including Lucia Dura, David Gasser, Jon Lloyd, Lynne Molnar, Mark Munger, Richard Pascale, Arvind Singhal, and Randa Wilkinson. The facilitators imbued their own experiences of implementing PD in the field into teaching the steps of the PD process. The two day workshop began with the facilitators sharing stories of how the PD approach has been implemented in various sectors around the world. The day continued with a Q&A session, as well as sessions about mastering the PD process and mapping to define the problem. At the end of day one, participants were invited to participate in a role-play activity with break-out groups.

Day two of the workshop focused on framing questions to discover positive deviant behaviors and strategies and the importance of active listening. The afternoon was devoted to group work on how one might begin to apply PD to participants' topics. The ending plenary provided the groups an opportunity to share what they had discussed, places where they were uncertain, and general observations.

One of the recurring comments from many participants was how energizing it was to have the opportunity to work with and learn from people from diverse sectors who are all equally devoted to creating a better world. At the end of the workshop, one of the participants commented that, "I don't think it is an understatement to say this approach could turn development on its head."

Photos: Yes, [click here to gallery.](#)