

Minimum Specifications to classify a project as a “Positive Deviance” project

A Positive Deviance project promotes community ownership and sustained behavioral and social change. A project may be considered a “PD project” if it meets the following ten criteria:

1. All stakeholders/ a diverse group of community members are involved in the five steps:
 1. **Define** the problem, current perceived causes, challenges and constraints, common practices, and desired outcomes
 2. **Determine** the presence of positive deviant individuals or groups in the community.
 3. **Discover** uncommon but successful practices and strategies through inquiry and observation.
 4. **Design** activities to allow community members to practice the discovered behaviors.
 5. **Monitor** and evaluate the resulting project or initiative which further fuels change by documenting and sharing improvements as they occur, and help the community discern the effectiveness of the initiative.
2. The community carries out the five iterative steps (see above).
3. The facilitator(s) do not make the discovery of findings nor do they control the process.
4. The PD inquiry is carried out by community members and vetted by community members.
5. The inquiry findings are explicit and behavior based (not value-based, or dependent on the individual traits of positive deviants). The findings should not focus so much on WHAT the positive deviant practices are, but about HOW the behavior of the positive deviants (individuals or groups) enables them to overcome or prevent the problem at hand.
6. The plan of action is developed by the community and based on each of the inquiry findings.
7. The initiative is practice-oriented, multi-channeled and multi-targeted, and utilizes existing human resources and networks.
8. The community develops its own monitoring and evaluation plan, including the creation of their own tools for doing so.
9. Feedback loops are developed to keep the community informed and enable members to participate and innovate.
10. The community members are able to explain how they have been able to solve the problem and provide specific examples of behavior and social change directly linked to the PD inquiry and the inquiry-informed initiative.