

MODULE 1

Diagnose the system behind the result

Find the operating condition that creates recurring results, then stabilize the practice before redesigning it.

BOOK READING

Book I · Chapters 1 and 16: The system behind recurring problems; the 90-day practice turnaround.

MODULE FIELD GUIDE

Practice by Design starts with a shift in the question: “What part of the system allowed this result to happen?” A recurring miss is a signal, not proof that a person does not care. Diagnose through five connected layers: destination and standard, measure and data, workflow, ownership and authority, and control or follow-through. Separate the visible symptom from the constraint that repeats. During a turnaround, first stabilize urgent patient and cash risks; then study the pattern; then address the constraint; finally build a control that keeps the improvement alive. Do not launch many initiatives before you know which problem matters most.

OPERATING TOOL

Recurring-Problem Log + Turnaround Board

Module learning route

Complete the six lessons in order. Use the companion Case Lab after the lesson sequence, then finish the module assessment and fieldwork self-review.

Trace a recurring problem to its source

Focus: Use the five-layer operating-system scan to distinguish a symptom from a system constraint.

LEARN • KEY IDEA

Log each occurrence with date, location, patient or business impact, step where work stopped, owner at that step, and whether the standard was known. Compare several examples before deciding what is common. Check the chain in order: Was the expected result clear? Was the information trustworthy? Did the workflow make the action possible? Did someone have authority and time to own it? Was there a control that exposed the miss early? This scan protects accountability from turning into blame: once the system is clear, the leader can still address a person's choice fairly.

PRACTICE • DENTAL-PRACTICE SCENARIO

The same patient follow-up is missed by three different coordinators over two weeks.

Choose your next move

- A. Coach each coordinator separately before mapping the shared handoff.
- B. Compare the missed cases and trace where ownership, timing, or information disappears.
- C. Add a reminder to everyone's calendar without checking the workflow.

My choice: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C What evidence would I check first?

PRACTICE DEBRIEF

A repeated miss across people points first toward a shared process or ownership gap. The log makes the pattern visible before you choose a fix.

Recurring-Problem Log + Turnaround Board

PRACTICE · APPLY THE OPERATING TOOL

Complete a five-case recurring-problem log. Mark the first point where the expected result diverged from what happened.

FIELD ASSIGNMENT

Bring the log to a 15-minute team review. Agree on one test that addresses the earliest common failure point.

Use the prompts below to make the assignment specific, testable, and safe to act on.

1. Current condition and baseline

2. Evidence, period, and data source

3. First action, owner, and due date

4. Measure, safeguard, and review date

Fieldwork status: ☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete ☐ Needs follow-up

Improve · Review and retain

REFLECTION PROMPT

Which layer of the operating system do I tend to skip when diagnosing a problem?

Teach-back

What was the signal? · Which part of the Project Compass or operating system addresses it?

What evidence will you review before deciding? · How will you protect patient experience, team capacity, and sound clinical judgment?

My reflection and next commitment

Knowledge check

What is the most useful first question about a recurring miss?

A. Who should be blamed?

B. What part of the system allowed it to happen?

C. How can we add another reminder?

My answer: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C Correct? ☐ 1 ☐ 0 Revisit this lesson? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If correct: apply the tool, record a baseline, and bring the result to review. If missed: return to the lesson, work the field case, then retake the check.

What I will do differently after this check
