EASIER Diagnostic Guide

How to identify the right primary dimension for any improvement initiative.

Before choosing a strategy, tools, or metrics, leaders must identify which EASIER dimension is the primary constraint. This guide walks through the diagnostic sequence and prerequisite checks that make that identification reliable.

WHY THIS STEP MATTERS

Most improvement failures are not execution failures — they are diagnostic failures. Organizations optimize for speed when the real problem is accuracy. They scale programs that aren't working. They automate inefficiency into the workflow rather than removing it. Getting the primary dimension right before committing to a strategy is the highest-leverage decision in any improvement initiative.

THE DIAGNOSTIC SEQUENCE

Work through these questions in order. Stop at the first question that reveals the binding constraint.

1 **Do we understand WHY current outcomes are what they are?**

If no: INSIGHTS first — you cannot reliably identify the primary dimension without causal understanding.
If yes: Continue to step 2.

Insights is the diagnostic gateway. If causal patterns are unknown, invest in understanding before committing to a dimension.

2 **Is the core approach actually producing the intended outcome?**

If no: EFFECTIVENESS — the approach itself is not working. Fix this before optimizing anything else.
If yes: Continue to step 3.

Effectiveness is the foundation. Do not optimize a broken process. Do not scale an approach that doesn't work.

3 **Is the information driving decisions reliable and accurate?**

If no: ACCURACY — the signals leaders rely on are wrong or inconsistent. Fix this before investing in Speed.
If yes: Continue to step 4.

Accuracy asks “Are the signals correct?” — different from Insights, which asks “Do we understand what the signals mean?”

4 **Is timing a binding constraint — does delay cause direct harm or missed opportunity?**

If no: Continue to step 5.
If yes: SPEED — the pace at which the work happens is limiting its value.

Speed matters when timing is the genuine binding constraint, not just when things feel slow.

5 **Is cost or sustainability the binding constraint?**

If no: Continue to step 6.
If yes: EFFICIENCY — the work produces the right outcomes but at unsustainable cost.

Only pursue Efficiency after Effectiveness is confirmed. Efficient execution of the wrong approach is waste.

6 **Is scale or equitable access the binding constraint?**

If no: Return to step 1. The constraint may require Insights work to surface.
If yes: REACH — the work is effective but too few people — or the wrong people — are benefiting.

Reach is about volume AND equity. Identify which populations are underserved and why.

COMMON DIAGNOSTIC PITFALLS

Skipping Insights: The most costly pitfall. Leaders choose a dimension without understanding why outcomes are what they are. The result: well-executed interventions aimed at the wrong constraint.

Confusing Accuracy with Insights: Accuracy = “Are the signals correct?” Insights = “Do we understand what they mean?” These are different problems requiring different interventions.

Pursuing Efficiency before Effectiveness: The most common organizational error. Automating a broken process makes it worse. Making an ineffective process faster magnifies the problem.

Scaling before confirming Effectiveness: Reach amplifies both successes and failures. Scaling an ineffective program harms more people and wastes more resources.

Treating Speed as the default: Speed matters when timing is genuinely the binding constraint. More often, other dimensions are primary and Speed is a secondary benefit of solving the actual problem.

USING THE EASIER APP

The EASIER App at easier.easierimprovement.com uses AI to run this diagnostic automatically. Describe the improvement challenge in plain language. The app identifies the primary dimension, explains its reasoning, and asks two targeted follow-up questions before generating a structured analysis with strategic approaches and canonical metrics.