

The 4 S's Framework

The 4 S's Tool (Start, Stop, Sustain, Scale) is a simple but powerful framework often used in team reflections, strategic planning, and performance improvement. It helps individuals and groups quickly evaluate what's working, what's not, and what actions to prioritize. Here's a breakdown:

1. Start

- **Definition:** New actions, practices, or behaviors the team/organization should begin doing.
 - **Purpose:** Encourages innovation and experimentation by identifying gaps or opportunities.
 - **Examples:**
 - Start holding weekly check-ins to improve communication.
 - Start collecting client feedback systematically.
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2. Stop

- **Definition:** Actions, processes, or habits that are no longer effective and should be discontinued.
 - **Purpose:** Frees up time, resources, and energy from unproductive practices.
 - **Examples:**
 - Stop duplicating reports that no one uses.
 - Stop scheduling meetings without clear agendas.
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3. Sustain

- **Definition:** Effective practices or behaviors that should continue because they bring value.
 - **Purpose:** Reinforces strengths and protects what's already working well.
 - **Examples:**
 - Sustain peer recognition rituals to maintain morale.
 - Sustain strong collaboration with community partners.
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4. Scale

- **Definition:** Practices that are working well and should be expanded or amplified for greater impact.
 - **Purpose:** Builds on successes and moves beyond "maintain" to "grow."
 - **Examples:**
 - Scale successful pilot projects across more departments.
 - Scale mentoring program to reach new hires organization-wide.
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When to Use the 4 S's

- After a project or program (for reflection and learning).
- During team retreats or offsites (to align on future priorities).
- As part of strategic planning (to balance innovation, focus, and growth).
- In leadership or coaching conversations (to encourage self-awareness and action).

Why It Works

- Simple: Easy to explain and apply in minutes.
- Balanced: Encourages both critical evaluation (Stop) and appreciation (Sustain).
- Action-Oriented: Produces tangible next steps.
- Collaborative: Useful in group settings to generate shared priorities.

Use this worksheet to reflect on team practices, projects, or strategies.

START (What should we begin doing to improve?)	STOP (What should we stop doing because it's ineffective?)
SUSTAIN (What should we continue doing because it works?)	SCALE (What should we expand because it's successful?)