

# TOYOTA KATA: Practice routines that empower and mobilize your team, to help you meet challenges

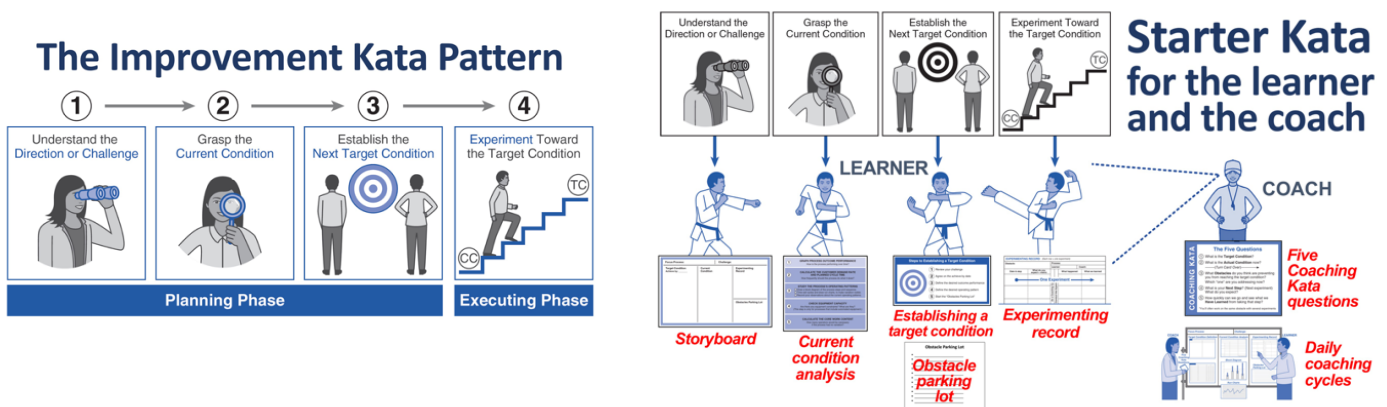
Toyota Kata is a teaching approach used by managers, supervisors and team leaders to generate adaptiveness, improvement and innovation – through practice of scientific thinking. Practicing the Toyota Kata routines makes anyone and any team better at navigating uncertainty and achieving challenging goals.

Toyota Kata does not teach problem solving, but rather a mindset and way of reacting that makes us more effective at problem solving. It's done by practicing “**Starter Kata**,” which are small, structured routines or protocols that are used to start developing a new skill. Building on the fundamentals learned through practicing Starter Kata, each team or organization then evolves their own way that suits their context.

Starter Kata increase the speed of learning and are especially helpful when you want to develop and scale up a shared way of thinking and working in a group of people, because everyone starts with the same basics. By adding practice of the TK Starter Kata routines into every workday you can scale the development of scientific thinking without extra resources. Managers/supervisors/team leaders grow to become the coaches.

**Toyota Kata** has its origins in Mike Rother's research on Toyota's management system, the findings of which are published in a series of books from McGraw-Hill Education. The research did not benchmark Toyota's solutions, it studied how Toyota *develops* solutions, which is primarily about psychology and transferrable to any team or organization.

The two main elements of Toyota Kata are a practical scientific pattern, called the **Improvement Kata**, and an associated set of simple **Starter Kata practice routines** for both the learner and the coach. Practicing these routines helps make the scientific-thinking patterns, and how to teach them, habitual.



Here's a good thing to remember. Toyota Kata is not a problem-solving method, but a way to develop practical scientific-thinking skills that make you and your team better problem solvers. It's brain training!