

DEP Lean Kaizen Event

Participant Roles and Responsibilities

Introduction: Kaizen is a combination of two Japanese words: *kai* meaning “to change” and *zen* meaning “for the good of all.” Kaizen events are a key to Lean’s effectiveness in which teams make rapid, breakthrough process improvements while creating an employee-empowered continual improvement culture. Kaizen events are action-oriented and encourage team members to identify ways to measure success in improving a process.

Kaizen events focus on eliminating waste in a process to improve productivity. The idea is that small, incremental changes applied on a regular basis and over a long period of time results in performance improvements. Participating in a Kaizen event will involve a commitment to three phases: pre-planning meetings before the event; the event itself, typically one week in duration; and, the project plan implementation phase which lasts approximately twelve months, depending upon the team’s needs. Following the event, teams will typically hold weekly progress status meetings; the frequency of the meetings change as project plan goals are met and the project nears completion.

A Kaizen team typically consists of no less than five but no more than nine members. In addition to the team leader, a recommended team of seven (can mix and match participants) would include two members who have day-to-day expertise close to the focus area, two members who don’t know the entire process but are closely-related to the process or provide support to it, two members who are completely outside the process within DEP, and one member outside the department (e.g., customer, supplier, or vendor).

Team “Sensei”/Facilitator:

- A “teacher” - *one who has gone before*
- Encourage the teams to think and challenge them
- Provide suggestions and direction
- Answer questions and give advice but does not necessarily provide the solutions
- Mentor the team leaders

Team Sponsor (manager who has ownership in the project):

- Work with the Team Leader and Team Champion to develop the Project Team Charter
- Attend pre-event meeting with facilitator to review the Project Charter, communicate expectations, and set the direction for the team
- Attend Lean Overview Training/”Kick-Off” on first day of event
- Visit team during the week to offer support, provide input as appropriate, and encourage creative thinking
- Assist team in removing obstacles to optimal team functioning, especially if management input is needed for the team to move forward (e.g., identify resource requirements)
- Attend daily report out meetings to redirect and challenge the team if needed
- Attend team’s final presentation on “Celebration Day”
- Attend meetings and presentations on the progress of the team whenever possible
- Offer to serve on future Lean teams
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices, and team results
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes
- Serve as a role model in the application of lean principles and practices

Team Champion:

- Work with the Sponsor and Team Leader to develop the Project Team Charter and identify team members who will add value to the project
- Attend pre-event meeting with facilitator to review Project Charter and other pre-event meetings with the team as scheduled
- Attend Lean Overview Training/"Kick-Off" on first day of event
- Participate with team every day during the event or visit periodically to offer support and provide input as appropriate (depends upon team's needs)
- Attend team's final presentation on "Celebration Day"
- Assist the Team Leader in communicating the team's needs and success to all interested parties during and after the event
- Assist team in its Project Plan Implementation to assure the team is moving forward in achieving their one-month, six-month, and twelve-month goals
- Attend team progress meetings following the Kaizen event
- Attend team debriefing/progress meeting two months after the event with facilitator
- Assist team in preparing the quarterly Lean Journey Team Summary and other requested documents for management's review
- Assist team in providing project-related information to the Agency Lean Coordinator for publication on the DEP Lean Initiative Intranet page
- Attend presentations on the progress of the team whenever possible
- Offer to serve as a member of future Lean teams
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices, and team results
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes
- Serve as a role model in the application of lean principles and practices

Team Leader:

- Work with the Sponsor and Team Champion to develop the Project Team Charter and identify team members who will add value to the project
- Attend pre-event meeting with facilitator and team to review Project Charter and schedule other pre-event meetings with the team as needed
- Gather the needed materials and do preliminary analyses in preparation for the event
- Ensure team brings suggested materials listed on the agenda to support the Lean event
- Communicates the team's needs and success to all interested parties during and after the event with the Team Champion's assistance
- Serve as project content owner
- Ensure all team members are contributing during the event and keep members focused on tasks to complete project deliverables
- Make sure everyone is heard and the team works together
- Support team members in finding solutions – help team use proper lean/kaizen tools
- Develop agenda and lead team meetings following the event
- Follow-up with team members as needed on completion of assigned tasks to achieve one-month, six-month, and twelve-month goals
- Attend team debriefing/progress meeting two months after the event with facilitator and other events as requested
- Ensure the objectives of the event are met
- Work with team members and Champion to provide project-related information to the Agency Lean Coordinator for publication on the DEP Lean Initiative Intranet page
- Lead the team in preparing the quarterly Lean Journey Team Summary and other requested documents for management's review with the Champion's assistance

- Offer to serve as a member of future Lean teams
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices, and team results
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes
- Serve as a role model in the application of lean principles and practices

Team Member:

- Attend pre-event meeting with facilitator to review Project Charter and other pre-event meetings as scheduled by the team leader; participate in the event and follow-up meetings for the duration of the project implementation (let Team Leader know if you are unable to attend at any time); includes members who are considered to be “outside” the process, serve as resources to the team, attend meetings as needed, and provide “constant gentle pressure”
- Equally contribute based on your knowledge of the process
- Have a “can do” attitude and take responsibility to create change
- Ask questions and make suggestions
- Learn how to use tools and techniques of lean analysis and lean implementation
- Learn from the team leaders and ask for help
- Be open to new ideas
- Work together as a team – be respectful of differing viewpoints
- Volunteer for tasks during the event to achieve continuing success in the project
- Participate in the final PowerPoint Presentation
- Participate in and contribute to post-event tasks and activities
- Attend team debriefing/progress meeting two months after the event with facilitator
- Work with Team Leader and Champion to provide project-related information to the Agency Lean Coordinator for publication on the DEP Lean Initiative Intranet page
- Work with Team Leader and Champion in preparing the quarterly Lean Journey Team Summary and other requested documents for management’s review
- Offer to serve as a member of future Lean teams
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices, and team results
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes
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Ad Hoc Subject Matter Experts:

- Attend the Lean event and provide input on the current and future process maps as requested
- Provide feedback to the team following the event as requested
- May participate in team daily report outs and/or Final Presentation
- May attend Team Final Presentations on “Celebration Day”
- Offer to serve as a member of future Lean teams
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices, and team results

Role of Management:

- Develop and promote a Lean Culture that creates added value by:
 - *Setting* the direction
 - *Creating* the environment for change
 - *Leading* the change process
 - *Rewarding* the right things
 - *Removing* the barriers and roadblocks
 - *Challenging* past practices and excuses

- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices, and team results
- Seek outreach opportunities to highlight the agency's Lean Initiative to other organizations and the public
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes
- Serve as a role model in the application of lean principles and practices

Adapted from Leanovations, LLC PowerPoint Presentation "Lean Training – Kaizen Event" (2006), University of Connecticut Health Center Performance Improvement Project Charter Guidelines (3/08), and Iowa Department of Management, Office of Lean Enterprise Web Site (<http://lean.iowa.gov/faq/index.html>), Frequently Asked Questions (2/09)

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