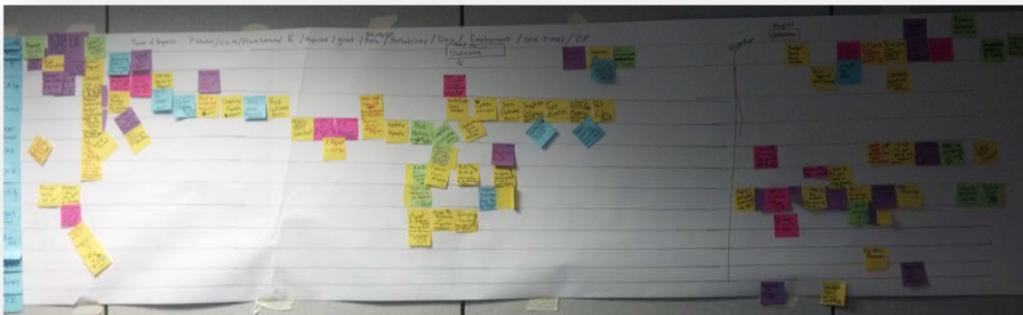




Kaizen Tool Kit

What is a Kaizen event?

Kaizen is one of the most important and commonly used tools in the Lean toolkit. The term is Japanese and means to change (kai) for the better (zen). Kaizen events allow participants to analyze a process, identify improvements, develop a project implementation plan for change and give them the tool to measure their success. Kaizen events focus on eliminating wasteful/unnecessary steps in a process to improve productivity, eliminate inefficiencies, increase quality and improve customer service.



Participating in a Kaizen event requires commitment in:

- pre-event planning meetings and data gathering;
- the event itself (3-5 business days in duration); and
- post-event project plan implementation (short and longer term goals).

Following the event, teams should hold regular progress status meetings using their Kaizen implementation plan as a guide; the frequency of the meetings change as project plan goals are met. Kaizen events will conclude with an actionable implementation plan; when put into place, this plan will result in real change!

Who should participate on a Kaizen team?

A Kaizen team typically consists of between five and ten members and is guided by a facilitator. These individuals perform the process analysis necessary to create an implementation plan for change.

Team members should include:

- Team Leader
- 1-4 members who have day-to-day expertise in the process being analyzed;
- 1-2 members who don't have day-to-day expertise but are closely-related or provide support to it (e.g. IT, Budget, etc.);
- 1-2 members who are completely outside the process, but are employed by the same agency or department that is holding the event; and
- 1-2 members outside the agency or department who have previous Lean/Kaizen experience.

Other participants to serve as guests:

- Customers (e.g. residents, municipalities, private industry, non-profits, Boards, Commissions, legislators, state employees, etc.)
- Other agencies/individuals who have a vested interest in the process being analyzed

Role of the Team Member:

- Attend pre-event meeting (s) to review Project Charter and assist in compiling necessary information/materials in advance of the event
- During the event, contribute freely based upon your knowledge of the process
- Maintain a positive attitude and be willing to discover opportunities for improvement
- Ask questions and make suggestions
- Learn how to use tools and techniques of Lean analysis and implementation
- Be respectful of differing viewpoints and focus on collaborative learning
- Volunteer for tasks during the event in order to help your team achieve success
- Participate in and contribute to post-event tasks and activities
- Attend team debriefing/progress meetings
- Work with Team Leader and Champion to provide project-related information to your agency's Lean Coordinator and the Program Director of LeanCT
- Offer to serve as a member of future Kaizen teams
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes

Role of the Guest:

- Attend the Lean event for as many hours/days as you can
- Provide input on the current and future process flow maps as requested
- Provide feedback to the team following the event as requested
- May attend and/or participate in Final Presentation
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices and results

Role of the Team Leader:

This is the person who owns the process

- Work with the Team Champion to develop the Project Charter and identify and select team members
- Organize and facilitate pre-event meeting(s) with team to review the Project Charter and based upon the project scope, identify necessary pre-event activities
- Gather baseline data and other necessary materials in preparation for the event
- Communicate the details of the event to all team members
- Work with the Team Champion to communicate the team's needs and success to all interested parties during and after the event
- Ensure all team members are contributing during the event and keep members focused on tasks to complete project deliverables
- Support team members in using the proper Lean tools to find solutions
- Follow-up with team members, as needed, to ensure completion of assigned tasks and achievement of short and long term goals
- Work with team members and Champion to provide KPI/metric updates to the agency's Lean Coordinator and the Program Director of LeanCT

Role of the Team Sponsor:

- Work with the Team Leader to develop the Project Charter and identify and select team members
- Attend pre-event meeting(s) to review Project Charter and other pre-event activities as necessary
- Assist team in removing obstacles/barriers to optimize team functioning, especially if management input is needed for the team to move forward (e.g., identify resource requirements)
- Visit team during the week to offer support, provide input as appropriate, and encourage creative thinking
- Attend Friday afternoon's Final Presentation
- Assist the Team Leader in communicating the team's needs and success to all interested parties before, during and after the event

- Provide support to the Team Leader in ensuring that the team's short and long term goals are met
- Attend team progress meetings following the Kaizen event whenever possible
- Assist team in providing project-related information to the agency's Lean Coordinator and the Program Director of LeanCT
- Educate self and others about Lean principles, practices and results
- Advocate for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes

Role of the Team Facilitator:

- Ensure positive momentum throughout the event
- Challenge the teams to think creatively and push the envelope
- Provide suggestions and direction
- This function can be provided by an outside vendor/consultant, professional trainer, or trained facilitator.

Role of Management:

Develop and promote a culture that values continuous improvement by:

- Encouraging team members to work collaboratively and find creative solutions
- Supporting the team in their ability to achieve short and longer term goals
- Visiting the team throughout the week and attending Friday afternoon's Final Presentation
- Educating self and others about Lean principles, practices and results
- Advocating for continuous improvement and streamlining of agency processes

Remember:

Kaizen events are just one aspect of developing a Lean culture in state government. There are many more tools that we can use to help us become more efficient and customer-focused, including value-stream analysis (a best-practice approach to find a full range of improvement opportunities), process mapping (included in every Kaizen event, it's also used as a stand-alone to help work areas understand their process and find quick-hit improvements), and 5S (a proven method for increasing productivity by better organizing the physical work space).