Rapid Process Improvement (Lean Kaizen Event)

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Agenda

- Define project and engage others (Plan)
- Hold process improvement event and implement the action plan (Do)
- Monitor progress and performance (Study)
- Adjust and sustain improvement (Act)

What is Rapid Process Improvement?

- A fast and effective approach to improve a process.
- Takes 3-5 days
- Conducted by a team (5-20 members) that includes people who represent all areas of the process/value stream (may include customers /external members)
- *Kaizen*: Change for the better

I. Define Project & Engage Others

A. Prepare Project Plan / Team Charter & Hold Pre-meeting

Project plan components:

- Problem and scope
- Goals and deliverables
- Agenda and logistics (time and place)
- Team members - roles and responsibilities
- Time commitment
- Project principles
- Communication plan

Hold pre-meeting with team:

- Review/adjust project plan and answer questions

Planning Advice

- Use an A3 Report form.
- Do not use a kaizen event to address employee performance issues.
- Include someone from outside of the work process on the team.
- Be clear on team member time commitment before, during and after the process improvement event.
- Educate/coach sponsors to manage their expectations for change.
- Sign charter – personal commitment

Communications & Outreach

- **Project Initiation**
  - Stakeholder notice with "elevator speech"
  - Team invitation/request

- **Project Execution**
  - Daily check-in (Sponsor , Team Leader, Facilitator)
  - Report out invitation
  - Progress reports (email, visual measures, newsletter)

- **Project Conclusion**
  - Celebration!
  - Reward and recognition

Communication Advice

- Solicit input from staff and stakeholders upfront
- Provide an avenue to report concerns, questions, and improvement ideas before, during and after the project.
- Publicize project – it shouldn't be a secret!
- Check-ins are critical to providing just-in-time guidance from sponsor (avoid zingers!)

II. Hold Event & Implement Action Plan

Hold Rapid Process Improvement Event

- Map the current process
- Identify wastes (e.g. waits, handoffs)
- Brainstorm improvement ideas
- Prioritize and agree on improvements
- Map the future process
- Prepares an action plan
- Define performance measures (KPIs)
- Provide a report out presentation to stakeholders

Event Advice

- Provide just-in-time training.
- If you cannot map the process the first day you should reduce project scope.
- Prioritize ideas based on impact & costs.
- Create & enforce team ground rules – manage resistance.
- Document the future process and centrally store process maps.
- Provide snacks.
- Have fun!

Implement Action Plan

- What?
- Who?
- When?
- Status (Green/ Yellow/ Red/ Purple!)

Implementation Advice

- List the name of the person responsible for completing each task.

- Post the action plan in an easily accessible place and make it easy to update.

- Focus conversation on tasks that are yellow and red status.

- Expect and plan for challenges.

- Hold weekly or daily status reports (standing meetings)

- Hold yourself and others accountable - take steps needed to achieve desired results.

- Reward people for bringing up issues - learn from successes and failures.

Monitor Progress & Performance

Performance Measures (KPIs)

- If you do not have performance measures, create performance measures during the event.

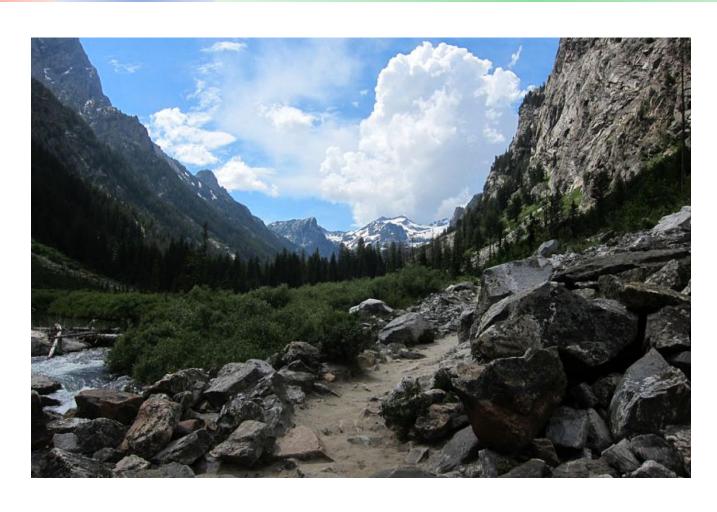- Track performance on a regular basis to see whether you are achieving expected performance levels.

Measures Advice

- Use both qualitative and quantitative measures (critical 2-4 measures).

- Use visual measures to quickly communicate progress, enhance standard work, and facilitate issue identification and resolution.

- Include in your action plan how and when you will monitor performance.

Adjust & Sustain Improvements

Adjust and Sustain Improvement

- Include in the action plan how and when you will review the process.

- Adopt, adapt, abandon the approach.

- At least annually revisit the process to assess opportunities for improvement (OFIs).

Sustaining Improvement Advice

- Expect to improve a process multiple times (3-5 times) to remove wastes and get closer to the Ideal.

Kaizen Event	Results
SSB: Assistive & Adaptive Technology Kaizen Event	Reduced technology evaluation assessment from 70 to 19 days (73% time reduction), 66% reduction in forms, standardized report forms, developed standard definitions, and enhanced supervisor ability to track progress and troubleshoot.
TAA Projects: 1) Customer Application Kaizen, 2) Purchase & Payment Redesign	• Kaizen: reduced application process from 83 to 39 days (53%). • Redesign: reduced purchase/payment from 72 to 38 days (47%). • Reorganized customer caseloads, formalized internal discussions on unusual customer cases, improved policy development process, improved training process.
UI: Customer Service Center Kaizen (General Mills & DEED)	Eliminated duplicate requests for status updates from the Customer Service Center staff and resulted in reducing status updates from 25 days to 1 day (96% time reduction)
UI: Phone Agent Problem Solving Project (General Mills & DEED)	Fishbone analysis: 50% reduction in supervisor time spent bringing additional agents on line (saved 2500 hours per year).

Questions

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