

 *Excerpts from the Lean handbook at the Department of Safety – each team member receives and reviews prior to the Kaizen event.*

In efforts to standardize the Lean projects at the Department of Safety, the following information must be understood and utilized. If you are reading this, then you have been chosen to make a difference within your project area. We know that programs come and go, but Lean is easy to use and virtually intuitive. As long as you are prepared to offer up your honest expertise, you are about to change processes and the culture around you.

Lean is simply a tool used to look at your business whether it is service, manufacturing, or any other activity where you have a supplier and a customer/receiver. The key thought processes within Lean are identifying 'waste' from the customer perspective and then determining how to eliminate it. Waste is defined as the activity or activities that a customer would not want to “pay” for and/or that add no value to the product or service from the customer's perspective. Once waste has been identified in the Current State, a plan is formulated to reach the Future State in an effective manner that encompasses the entire system.

MODEL THE WAY

It is the responsibility of each person to feel safe to voice their opinion. No one on the team has any more authority to make suggestions than anyone else. It is often during the brainstorming process that we highlight much needed “out of the box” ideas. No one’s perspective is to be dismissed, derided or belittled.

Perhaps most importantly, each person has to mean what he/she says. Each person has to walk the talk and be seen doing it both consistently and predictably. When aspects of the charter are being weakened or not adhered to, ANY team member can and will “stop the sausage line.” Bring the charter violation to the attention of the Project Manager who will then realign and communicate with the team accordingly. No one had the authority to change the Lean Charter with the written consult and permission of the Commissioner.

CHALLENGE THE PROCESS












Absolutely key to making improvements is the ability of all staff to question the work, to question the process – the ability of those doing the work at any level to identify waste and to make suggestions for change and improvement.

It is not possible for staff to “challenge” the process if there is no trust or opportunity for safe, risk-taking communication. It must be recognized and explicitly communicated that different perspectives are, in fact, valued, that teamwork does not equal one opinion/mind – that teamwork is about people sharing their ideas, concerns, and perspectives, working together toward common goals. At Safety if you cannot prove you are a change agent, consistently changing for the better, and your career path will be limited.

ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT

Establishing Open, Clear, Ongoing Communication Channels. Communication must work in both directions; have a commitment on everyone’s part to share concerns and ideas, and ensure a fair and safe environment for communication and discussion. This requires a thoughtful, planned infrastructure to serve as the foundation for communication channels. Gemba walks performed pre/post events to understand and encourage continuous improvement.

QUANTITATIVE SUPPORT

-  Number of Employees Lean Trained: 163 or 12.6%
-  Number of Engaged on the Lean Bench: 18 or 1.4%
-  Number of Events Completed: 21
-  Number of events Facilitated: 28
-  Number of Collaborative Events (Safety + other agency): 8
-  International Consult: Fredericton, New Brunswick Canada
-  Member of Lean Executive Committee and Quarterly Lean Meeting Site
-  Lean Cultural Change Efforts: 3
 -  Commissioner Driven Annual Survey to discern Lean “reach”
 -  Front Line Supervisory Training – Bi-Annual Outreach to 120+ employees
 -  Planning “Lean Lab”/conference area – Physical Display of Lean Successes and dedicated space.

Benjamin Franklin best sums up our efforts at Safety:

“WELL DONE IS BETTER THAN WELL SAID.”

