

KAIZEN RESULTS

Ohio law enforcement and staff will get faster IT support from the AG's Office

IN BRIEF: Quick access to information is critically important to law enforcement. That's why IT Services at the Ohio Attorney General's Office serves a crucial role – and why Kaizen-powered improvements to the IT support process will further strengthen efforts to safeguard Ohioans.

CUSTOMER FOCUS: The newly developed support process puts customers in the driver's seat. They will use a simple web form to submit their service requests quickly and completely, and an online dashboard will provide instant updates regarding the status of IT service work orders.

MORE THAN TWICE AS FAST: With the new process, it will take just 5 days to get a new employee up and running with all their computer equipment and systems in place and fully operational – compared to 14 days with the previous process. The new process eliminates all delays for this kind of "on-boarding" work order, while reducing loopbacks from 7 to 1 and cutting the number of handoffs in half.

BIG GAINS IN EFFICIENCY: Across all work orders for IT support, the new process is expected to reduce loopback time (circling back to the customer for needed information) by 95%, and to reduce follow-up time by 98%.

Kaizen Event RESULTS SCORECARD	BASELINE*	PROJECTIONS*	
	Key process measures, gathered at the start of the Kaizen event	Projected measures once all improvements are in place	PROJECTED CHANGE
PROCESS STEPS	84	39	54% reduction
HANDOFFS	10	5	50% reduction
DELAY POINTS	6	0	100% reduction
OVERALL PROCESS TIME	14 DAYS	5 DAYS	64% reduction

*This scorecard compares key measures for an "on-boarding" work order to set up IT systems for a new employee – using the current process vs. the new process.

DETAILS

Information technology is crucial to the work of the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Law enforcement agencies, AG employees, and others need quick access to information in their work to safeguard Ohioans.

To facilitate this, the agency's IT Services Call Center serves thousands of customers. In just six months last year, IT Services completed 20,031 IT work orders. ITS is usually the first point of contact with customers who need help with their computer hardware or software. Requests arrive via email (60%) and phone (40%).

It's a big job indeed, and IT support was functioning well. But leadership and staff wanted to go from good to great. They turned to Kaizen as their tool set for getting it done.

Over the course of a week-long Kaizen event, 19 managers, staff, and customers analyzed every aspect of the current process. They uncovered all occurrences of inefficiency, brainstormed improvement ideas, and reached consensus on a set of high-impact changes. Then the team developed a future-state process guaranteed to improve the customer experience.

One big improvement occurs at the start of the new process. A customer-friendly web form is being developed, to serve as a standardized point of entry. This will ensure that customers provide complete information about their IT situation when they first submit their request for help – sharply reducing the loopbacks and confusion that often occur when service requests contain scant information.

In addition, once a work order is created, customers will be able to track

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Team members: Back row, from left: Lindsay Gladman (ODJFS), Lakeima Roberts, Dustin Lazzarine, Aaron Shore, Chad Ivery, Glen Patterson, Amy Brown. Middle row: Joy Endrulas, Mark Smith (Team Leader), Heather Stubbs, Mark Edwards, Laura Weatherspoon, Conchita Matson, Kris Hilty (Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland). Front row, from left: Kim Vinova, Delores Elliott, Angela Cherry, Debra Hufstader, and James Gregory.



Left: It's hard work creating a detailed map of the current process, but it's an essential early step in every Kaizen event. The mapping process gives everyone an in-depth understanding of what occurs from start to finish. It helps teams distinguish between process steps that add value and steps that don't. It yields insights that point the way to major improvement opportunities.

the status of the work online. This will keep customers fully informed while reducing status-checking phone calls and emails to the IT Services Call Center. And when the work order is completed, customers will be invited to take a four-question online survey where they can give feedback to IT Services staff.

Customers will even be able to specify whether they want to be updated by an IT team member as the work unfolds, or when the work is completed, or both. In the past, considerable time was spent contacting and re-contacting customers to keep them informed. The Kaizen team's fact-finding showed that some customers appreciate the personal contact while others just want the work to get done. The new process lets the customer decide whether this personalized follow up occurs. This tailors it for the customer while reducing the amount of time that IT spends providing updates.

The team measured the projected impact of its new process by focusing on a specific work order: getting a new employee up and running with all their computer equipment and systems in place and fully operational.

This "on-boarding" process has taken 14 days on average, but when the new approach is fully in place, it will take just 5 days. The process involves 54% fewer steps, 50% fewer handoffs, 86% fewer loopbacks, and 100% fewer delays.

Additional improvements are slated: standardizing the IT Services phone greeting to route incoming calls more effectively, standardizing the email communications that go to customers, developing an electronic user agreement form, organizing brown-bag sessions for customers (starting with a session to introduce the improvements), creating a dashboard that will show the status of all work orders, and more.

As the Kaizen event unfolded, the customer perspective was always at the table because the team included customers. Among them was Kris Hilty, Continuous Improvement Manager at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. During the team's capstone presentation, she mentioned how the five-day Kaizen event had unfolded smoothly, resulting in major improvements not only to the process, but also to the sense of unity among agencies. "We've been able to develop a real partnership," she said.

Another team member who is also a customer of IT Services, supervisor Conchita Matson of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, described the week-long Kaizen event as a major learning experience. "I can take the tools and apply them to our work at BCI," she said. ●



Above: Team members discuss their improvement ideas. From left: Delores Elliot, Kris Hilty, Debra Hufstader, Joy Endrulas, Glen Patterson, Dustin Lazzarine, Mark Edwards, and Heather Stubbs.



Above: A subgroup pools its ideas for a redesigned process. From left: Dustin Lazzarine, Joy Endrulas, Kim Vinova, Chad Ivory, Lakeima Roberts, and James Gregory.