LEANOhio

SIMPLER • FASTER • BETTER • LESS COSTLY

The LeanOhio Mission: Lead and support efforts that make government services simpler, faster, better, and less costly.

Vision: To be recognized as a national leader and the go-to resource in Ohio for making government more efficient and effective.

Visit lean.ohio.gov for detailed information, results, and resources.

Kaizen Events

改善 KAIZEN

The term **KAIZEN** is Japanese, meaning to change (kai) for the better (zen). Kaizen teams do just that, analyzing every part of a work process, then rebuilding it to be simpler, faster, better, and less costly.

A Kaizen event is a one-week improvement blitz aimed at overhauling a core work process. Used extensively at leading private-sector companies and public-sector agencies, Kaizen is an approach of choice for increasing efficiency, boosting customer satisfaction, and cutting costs.

In Ohio state government, Kaizen teams are on the move and getting great results: streamlined processes, reduced red tape, greater efficiency, increased customer satisfaction, and big savings.

Here's how Kaizen is different...and better

Improvement has always been a priority in state government, but Kaizen takes it to a new level. Here's how:

INTENSITY

A Kaizen team does all its work in a nonstop stretch from Monday through Friday. This compressed time frame ensures continuity and efficiency.

IMMEDIACY

Too often in the past, teams generated recommendations that never got implemented. With Kaizen, implementation is more immediate. While some improvements may need to be phased in, many changes are put in place during the Kaizen week. Agency directors, assistant directors, team sponsors, and other key leaders visit with the team as the week unfolds to get updates, give input, make decisions, and remove barriers.

IMPORTANCE

Kaizen has its biggest measurable impact when used to improve major processes. The best candidate for a Kaizen event is a costly, complex, delay-ridden process that is crucial to customers and integral to the agency's strategic priorities.

Here's what happens during a Kaizen event

A Kaizen event begins with just-in-time learning on Monday...and ends with a celebration and presentation of plans and projected results on Friday. In between, team members dive deeply into their work process. They question their assumptions, apply their experience, exercise their creativity, analyze the data, and build a process that's far simpler, faster, better, and less costly.

DAY 1 LEARNING	DAY 2 DISCOVERY	DAY 3 IMPROVEMENT	DAY 4 IMPLEMENTATION	DAY 5 RESULTS
Learn Kaizen methodology	Finish mapping current process	Design new process	Review and refine changes	Present results and changes
Begin mapping current process	Develop ideas for improvement	Calculate measurable impact	Develop implementation plans	Schedule follow-ups

A Kaizen team typically involves 10-18 people. This includes staff who work the process, managers or supervisors of the process, one or more customers or other stakeholders, and even an outsider with no knowledge of the process who can bring a fresh perspective.

On the right is a snapshot of a Kaizen event on its fourth day. Here's what's happening:

A. A subgroup fine-tunes plans to develop informational materials and training to support the improvements.

B. A LeanOhio consultant fine-tunes the new process map based on input from the team.

C. One of the Kaizen participants consults with a subgroup for clarification.

D. The group on the right is working on details of an especially complex part of the new process. They will report their findings to the whole group in order to build consensus.

E. Stretching from the wall on the right and continuing on the left is a complex map of the current process. On the facing wall (B) is a map of the new approach – with 101 fewer steps!