

Kaizen events are used in Ohio state government to dramatically improve and streamline processes, cut costs, and increase overall customer satisfaction.

While state government has practiced various process improvement methods in the past, a Kaizen event is notable different.

- During a Kaizen event, the team meets for an entire week, starting Monday afternoon and makes a final presentation Friday.
- The Kaizen approach is action-oriented, and implementation begins immediately. The process is not about simply making recommendations.
- As a Kaizen event unfolds, team members use Lean and Six Sigma tools to identify value-added steps in the process, to remove waste and variation, and to build a simplified process that benefits customers and the bottom line.

Before, during, and after the Kaizen event, there are key roles that must be filled. Below is a summary of what does what.



Senior Leadership

Before the Kaizen event: Senior Leadership is aware of and supports moving forward with the Kaizen event.

During the event: Shows his/her support for the event by attending and speaking at the event opening on Monday. Senior Leadership is also encouraged to stop by any time during the event to see how the team is progressing and to show their support. They also attend the final report out at the end of the event and share their thoughts on the team’s accomplishments.

After the event: Updated regularly on the team’s progress. Addresses any issues that neither the team leader nor the team sponsor can. Recognizes the team’s efforts and accomplishments.

Sponsor

Before the Kaizen event: Ensures people and resources are available for the event. Approves scoping document.

During the event: Holds brief meetings with team lead and facilitator(s) during or after each day of the event. Addresses and removes barriers and secures resources as needed.

After the event: Attends all follow-up meetings, addresses any issues as needed, and provides team recognition.

Key Roles of a Kaizen Event

Team Leader

Before the Kaizen event: Coordinates logistics, including reservation of facilities, procurement of supplies and equipment, etc. Communicates with the union(s) leadership. Invites process owners and customers to participate on the team. Identifies subject matter experts. Works with the facilitator to clarify the scope of the project, to identify and collect data and other background information, and to finalize the scoping document.

During the event: Participates as a team member. Keeps pulse of team for assisting in setting daily direction/agendas with facilitator. Communicates with the team sponsor. Contacts subject-matter experts as needed.

After the event: Tracks team history and archives any materials/documentation. Schedules follow-up progress-check meetings at 30-day, 60-day, 90-day, and one-year intervals.

Team Members

A Kaizen team is made up of people who perform, supervise, and benefit from the process. Including customers on the team is recommended. This ensures that the team brings together three key elements: process expertise, input from the people being served by the process, and a *fresh perspective* from those with no process knowledge.

Before the Kaizen event: Communicates with the team leader about logistics and purpose. Raises any concerns and looks to participating in team environment. Attends any pre-event meetings, as necessary.

During the event: Participates as a team member as an active/engaged participant bringing their direct knowledge or fresh perspective to the event concerning the process. Follows ground rules and shares desire to attain change.

After the event: Attends any post-event meetings as necessary and follows up on any assignments as designated for the team's continued success.

Subject Matter Experts

Before the Kaizen Event: Communicates with the team leader about logistics and purpose.

During the event: Be available during the Kaizen event to help the team with questions they may have while working to implement the future state (i.e. IT, Legal, HR, etc).

After the event: Attends any post-event meetings as necessary and follows up on any assignments as designated for the team's continued success.