

A Guide to Lean Six Sigma Success

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INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive environments pressure to cut costs, deliver faster service with better quality and with improved operational efficiencies seem as relevant as ever. In particular these pressures are emphasised by increased competition driving companies to adopt new and innovative practices to ensure they remain viable within their industry sectors.

The failure to grasp opportunities which come along are all too often missed because clients simply seek other alternate sources of supply when you fail to deliver, in full and on time. If you cannot deliver then there always seems to be someone else who will and this often results in your organisation coming under pressure to retain contracts. Alternatively your failure to deliver often allows your customers to use these events as future leverages for pricing negotiations.

So what are the roadblocks to achieving your targets and which are resulting in these lost opportunities? Adopting Lean Six Sigma within your organisation can help you do exactly that, identify the solutions necessary which when implemented enable the achievement of results! It is an internationally recognised and accepted process improvement methodology which allows an organisation to build upon its existing capabilities, to become Safer, Faster and Better able to operate at Reduced costs, yet in ways which are sustainable.

So what is Lean Six Sigma? Lean Six Sigma is a continuous improvement methodology which focuses upon the elimination of waste and the reduction of variation found within processes, whether they are production, manufacturing or transactional in nature.

- Lean: - Is a methodology which aims to reduce non-valued added activities that will lead to the goal of reduced cycle times.
- Six Sigma: - Is a methodology to identify and reduce variability and thus improve overall quality.

Certainly many organisations are now enthusiastically seeking to embrace Lean Six Sigma but a word of caution. One needs to take a holistic approach, where tools and methods are adapted to suit the needs of an organisation. One size does not fit all and there is little point in following a convoluted process of many steps to improvement when it is clear to all that a move directly to a certain point will bring about a faster and just as effective solution or result.

The need to continually evolve the tools and methods available is forever paramount, yet at the same time we must resist the temptation to throw out those tools which are seemingly dated. Using the mining, oil and gas industry with its heavy dependence upon costly capital equipment as an example, it would be foolhardy at best to throw out tools and methods such as Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Reliability Centred Maintenance (RCM) and Theory of Constraints (TOC). Yet many

organisations do exactly that, not because they are not good tools but because they are misunderstood, misused or because they have not achieved the desired result.

Importantly, implementation of these and many other Lean Six Sigma methodologies needs to embody an organisation's culture if they are to ultimately prove meaningful and sustainable, to become part of the culture and indeed to assist in the evolution of that culture.

Need help with your Business Efficiency Solutions?

Segla International Pty Ltd is an Australian company dedicated to being the supplier of choice when it comes to delivering business efficiency solutions utilising Six Sigma, Lean and Process Improvement methodologies.

We are a niche training and consulting organisation that approaches continuous improvement in unique and innovative ways, through targeted, flexible and scaleable adaptation of the many tools and methods at their disposal. Through the application of Industrial Engineering and Lean Six Sigma Methodologies championed by them, they focus upon achieving reduced complexity and variation throughout all areas of business.