Implementing process improvement solutions in any work environment

Lean Six Sigma represents one of the most widely recognized methods for improving the efficiency of daily operations within organizations. For years, these techniques have been used in a vast array of businesses, to increase productivity and output. But can process improvement be used in every workplace situation?

As it turns out, the answer is yes. All workplaces are comprised of a series of processes with measurable outcomes. If each of these processes can be measured, then they can be modified, improved, and controlled using these standardized methodologies.

The primary obstacle that many organizations face when embarking upon a process improvement project is defining measurable outcomes. You cannot improve what you don’t properly measure at the outset.

One example in facilities management is how well janitorial services are being performed throughout a building. But if we don’t outline how this will be measured, it will be impossible to later assess whether any improvement has been made.

So how should we measure this outcome? By defining a unit, an opportunity, and a defect. Defects per Opportunity (DPO) is the probability of units being produced by a given process with zero defects.

For janitorial services, defining these measures could involve quantifying the number of trash bins (the opportunities), and assessing the number of trash bins not cleared (the defect), to determine the failure rate of the process of removing garbage.

In this way, every task can be viewed as a process, which, once measured, can be improved. And every organization, regardless of type, can use these common methods to improve their operational processes.

Surrey, we like the way you think!

Our Idea Generation Event has kicked off, and we’re already seeing some great ideas for improvement.

The Facilities Services team at Surrey jumped in with both feet and had some fun coming up with ideas on how to improve everything they do. New team member Treena Miller came up with some creative artwork to recognize the participants.

Marie Schneider, Manager Facilities Services (Surrey), said that “we couldn’t wait for the Idea cards. 7 team members, 10 minutes, 24 ideas!! And lots of laughs and camaraderie.”

The Surrey team has continued to generate additional ideas, and have come up with over 50 ideas for improvement . . . and they’re still going!