



Change for the Better

by Michael Buerger

All of us within the LeanOhio Network are familiar with the term “Kaizen”; we know it refers to on-going change or continuous improvement, and we use it regularly when referring to our week-long process improvement events. But did you know that “Kaizen” specifically comes from two Japanese words: “kai”, meaning ‘change’, and “zen”, meaning ‘good’? In other words – “change for the greater good.” Improvement is not just about making something better, but also doing something for the genuine good of the people. We at LeanOhio believe that the time is ripe for Kaizen now more than ever before.

The racism that exists in our country continues to take lives and spread inequality and injustice. Recent acts have also ignited a call for change. At LeanOhio, we know we have a unique capacity to help move this change by providing government the tools to deliver better results for communities, for Black residents, and for all people of color.

Respect for People

The core values of Lean methodology are grounded in respect for people. Leading respectfully not only improves business results but also the lives of workers, their families, their community, and, ultimately, society. When Lean is thriving in organizations, it represents continuous improvement and respect for people. Lean strives to always involve and empower the people closest to the work so that they can assess the current process, create solutions to problems and standardize what’s working.

Data Analysis

The statistical analysis tools taught in Lean Six Sigma training continue to help government agencies improve equity by helping to understand customer needs, continuously improve services for both internal and external customers, and share what works between government agencies to speed problem-solving. If we have the capacity to effectively use data to make accurate decisions, we can create thriving communities of opportunity for all.

We are committed to taking what we know about solving problems and applying it to improving government processes. We will look for ways to help move society forward, deepen our understanding of the problem of racism, and reflect on and change our own behaviors.

The leadership team at DAS recently shared with the organization this [video](#) from the Governor, and we encourage others to watch it too. We look forward to working collaboratively with all of you to advance social justice and racial equity at work and in our daily lives.