

# LEAN LEADER

**“Continued focus on excellence in service”**

**A LeanOhio interview with Lawissa Tidrick  
IT Project Manager 2 and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt at the Ohio Department of Health**

*Lawissa Tidrick began her state employment with the Department of Health in 2004 and quickly realized her experience from the private sector did not readily translate to use for public sector initiatives. She earned a LeanOhio Green Belt in 2013 and achieved her Black Belt Certification in 2016. She has since improved many processes and sponsored multiple projects within the Department of Health. Lawissa also volunteers her time to teach various sections of LeanOhio Boot Camp.*



**How do you apply the concepts used in Lean Six Sigma working as an IT Project Manager in your agency’s Office of Management Information Systems?**

I am a member of the ODH’s Quality Improvement Committee devoted to training and promoting a culture of process improvement throughout our agency. It is my objective that our IT Project Management Office (PMO) provides Lean facilitation services prior to our customers requesting a custom IT solution or software enhancement project. At a minimum, we’ll assist the product owner with a current and future state process map before building the IT solution. I require our IT project managers achieve a green belt level or higher status with Lean to ensure we can achieve this goal.

**What project/event/initiative are you most proud to have been a part of at Health?**

My black belt project, [“Delighting ODH help Desk Customers”](#). Through collection of voice of the customer data, it was determined that the ODH Help Desk was not meeting timeliness and quality goals to the satisfaction of the customer. I approached the project as a Lean Routine and worked with a team of Help Desk staff and customers throughout the agency for several weeks. We leaned up several processes, set goals for improving customer satisfaction ratings, and put measurements in place to monitor the improvements. All this activity made our transition smoother into ServiceNow as our service ticketing tool of choice.

The side benefits that we achieved by improving communications within ODH regarding the Help Desk process was invaluable. We now have transparency of the internal process and timeframes. Having staff and customers come together toward a common goal was very rewarding.

**What is one of the challenges you’ve encountered during your Lean journey, and how did you address it?**

Probably the timing of trying to achieve my black belt was the most challenging. I had taken on some additional responsibilities for our IT PMO. Coming up to speed on new job responsibilities along with attending black belt training would have been impossible if not for the tremendous support I had

received from my manager, Nathan Huskey at Health. Past and current executive staff have been very supportive of my Lean journey and provided me with multiple opportunities to utilize the skills I achieved.

**You sponsored and mentored many belt participants that completed very successful projects. You also volunteer to train sessions in LeanOhio Boot Camp. What drives you to consistently give back and support others in the LeanOhio Network?**

I truly believe in the process. I enjoy the feeling I get from working with a team of individuals towards something that makes people's work life more enjoyable. I get a real kick out of that first moment people's eyes open to the possibilities. Helping others in their Lean journey assures we all continue to benefit from this important work. The more people are exposed, the easier it is to change our culture and it becomes a way of life.

**What advice do you have for individuals who are new to the Lean Six Sigma community in government?**

Volunteer to join a process improvement team or Kaizen event and go in with an open mind as to the possibilities. Take advantage of any training offered and start small to build your experience and self-confidence. Look for opportunities within your own area to apply what you have learned and share with others. It is important to stay connected to people within the Lean community and reach out when you need help.

**On a personal level, are there any facts or tidbits that your colleagues might find interesting or surprising?**

I love to quilt in my spare time. I enjoy everything from traditional quilting to designing art quilts. The creative process can be lengthy and discouraging if you don't have a lot of spare time. I have used lean tools to improve my own process so I'm not taking as much time to finish a quilt. 5S was especially helpful and I enjoy my work area much more then when I first started quilting.