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Office Kaizen: Transforming Office Operations Into A Strategic Competitive Advantage



Synopsis

Many business functions have been significantly improved through the use of a variety of quality techniques, but for the most part office and administrative functions have not kept pace. Most companies find it difficult to reduce costs in the office without noticeable sacrifices in performance. Some progressive companies are seeing improvements in their office environments through the use of Office Kaizen, which emphasizes making continuous improvements over the long haul. Office Kaizen: Transforming Office Operations Into a Strategic Competitive Advantage presents a unified, consistent approach that enables businesses to establish a strategic competitive advantage by significantly improving the efficiency, quality and productivity of their office and administrative processes.

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Customer Reviews

After nearly 4 years experience as a 6 Sigma Black-belt leading projects centered on the commercial side of a Fortune-500 enterprise---sales, marketing, marketing services, customer

service, HR, etc.-I was pleased to see the emphasis on implementation tactics at the level where most of the detailed work of an organization gets done. It fills the gap left by bigger programs. It is not so much a "How to" book as it is a "WHY to" book of logic meant to motivate and provoke thought. It fills a gap where other, bigger name programs can fail to deal with the sustaining power of changing human behavior. But with Office Kaizen there appears to be a proven path forward. Much of the 6 Sigma work I have seen in transactional projects often fails to meet expectations and truly improve outputs in ways that last longer than the `official' measurement period. Such projects often encompass arenas of business activity in which no formal process map has ever existed, even less the mere idea that a process exists. Lacking a consensus understanding of work flow, it follows that NO standards for output exist; NO metrics are captured to qualify those standards; little consideration for the customer's expectations of quality is built into the process; and clearly NO discipline is needed where there is NO process structure. Not surprisingly, little sense of ownership is evident. It's a steep slope that only leads to status quo and mild, but constant chaos! Modifying the human aspects of process change is often challenging for 6 Sigma methodologies that better fit finite manufacturing, logistical and similarly tangible processes.

This book should have been titled "Kaizen Office". The title and book description are somewhat misleading. The book is not about how to apply Kaizen techniques to the office environment to remove waste with actionable instructions and examples. The book is actually about how a company should be structured to achieve "continuous improvement". It begins with the installation of an Executive Steering Committee (ESC) that oversees and directs improvement efforts for the company. It further recommends individual action teams and work groups all of which are highly structured with regular meetings, metrics, and charters. Each workgroup is instructed to have a visual control board where the group meets daily to discuss the metrics, KCG 20 keys, and improvement suggestions. The focus of the metrics and improvement suggestions for the group are only those which the group can control, everything else flows up to the ESC who can assign an improvement team to work on the effort. Overseeing the whole process is a Mentor, who is essentially the Continual Improvement Manager who understands, applies, and trains on the tools of continual improvement. We already have "roughly" this sort of structure, so there was nothing new there. The book does go into some detail on various forms of waste including Leadership waste, which was interesting. The KCG 20 keys were also rather interesting. It consists of 20 different keys that measure items such as: Documentation Management, Time Management, Workplace Arrangement, Problem Solving, & Priority Management for each workgroup. Each has a 1-5 point

value where 1 is the usual mess, 4 is world class, and 5 is currently invincible. The last thing I found to be useful was the level of responsibility that the ESC has and the expectations placed on them.

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