

INFORMATION PAPER

This information paper should provide you with a general understanding of Lean and Six Sigma to include its applicability in an office environment.

The Army is about to embark upon a journey to change the way we conduct business. This is a significant matter for the Secretary and the Chief of the Army and will require an extensive leadership commitment at all levels.

Lean Six Sigma (LSS) will be the primary tool used for this transformation within the Army. It is the optimum approach to effectively enhance organizational performance. Several aspects such as fundamental beliefs and values, organizational infrastructure, education and training, methods and tools, and task/project execution must be integrated in the Army's approach for this effort. In the near future, many of these aspects will be used in the Acquisition Support Center's (ASC) effort to implement LSS concepts. The approach being implemented by the Army is based on the assumption that all organizations should exist to generate the required outcomes or results. These outcomes, the effects of outputs, follow from resources (inputs) that are acted upon by a process.¹

Many processes are prone to being influenced by causes that impact the overall performance of the process. 'Six Sigma' will reduce process output time. 'Lean' along with discipline adds speed to the process which emphasizes a direct tie to excellence. These concepts used in combination facilitate the improvement of a process through removing inefficiencies, reducing variability, or (re) creating a process that is more streamlined and flows smoothly.

Once LSS is initiated, it will be vital for ASC to align the strategic ends, ways and means with fundamental LSS objectives. This will require ASC to collect data, to identify core processes that can be sustained and those that require a transformation. In transforming the way we conduct business, the main focus is about doing the right things with the right resources for the organization and the people.

The bottom line on Lean Six Sigma is Change Management – a new way of thinking. Lean and Six Sigma principles can be applied in an office environment, but there are challenges that must overcome (e.g. identifying work flow and/or customer, waste and cost of specific steps within a process).²

In the near future, many of you will help to identify processes in our current work environment that can be improved by using Lean Six Sigma thinking. The Strategic Planning and Analysis Branch will facilitate and successfully execute ASC's transformation through appropriate interaction with, direction and support from all divisions. Our success is generated by the implementation of process improvements.

¹ Executive Summary, "Deployment Director's Initial Guidance", dated: 4 October 2005

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