

LEAN SIX SIGMA/BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION



Renee Kelly (left front) discusses her LSS Green Belt Project, Missile Backorder Processing, with team members Carrie Caldwell, Bethany Marbut, and Debra Brenner, all from Project Office JAMS. (U.S. Army photo by Deanie Blankinchip.)

A Tool Set for Cultural Change and Operational Efficiency

Frank J. De Luca Jr.

I get the distinct pleasure to serve daily on the Program Executive Office (PEO) Missiles and Space (M&S) staff. One of my key duties, in addition to facilities, operations, and security, is serving as the Deployment Director for Business Transformation. Consequently, I am involved at both the management and execution levels of

our business operations, looking across the entire PEO at our people and their business processes. Our objective is to provide efficient and effective products and services to our Nation's warfighters. Overall, I think that we do a fantastic job supporting our Soldiers; yet, realistically, we can always get better.

Recall the old high school mathematics example: relative to two points and continually dividing the distance between the two, the two points never touch. The reason is that there are infinite possibilities when you continually divide the distance between those two points; you never get there. In reality, that distance mathematics example applies to our current business practices. If you believe that what we do today can never get any better, then you simply ignore the infinite possibilities that continuous process improvement (CPI) brings to the Army business process of warfighter support.

In our PEO, I have seen dedicated people use continuous improvement tool sets to positively influence their world. In this article, I will share a few of those examples with you. Additionally, over the next few issues of *Army AL&T Magazine*, there will be a series of articles that will cover other examples that will discuss the practical application of CPI tool sets, such as Lean Six Sigma (LSS), that we use in our ongoing efforts to achieve process improvement, but more importantly, institutional and cultural change.

Joint Attack Munition System (JAMS) LSS Project

In the first accompanying article to this series on Page 47, we cover a very important project that COL Michael Cavalier, JAMS Project Manager, and his team initiated to address the HELLFIRE Missile Captive Carry project. For those of you who do not know Cavalier, he is a seasoned and innovative leader who is not afraid to accept change, try something new, and measure it solely on its contribution to the success of his people, program, and organization.

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What makes Cavalier a more effectual leader is that he is a recent Department of the Army-certified LSS Green Belt.

Understandably, Cavalier's diverse knowledge and broad experiences have fully prepared him to deal with the daily challenges of project management. However, to his personal and professional armory, he added a collection of LSS tools, techniques, and practices that he and his JAMS team used to address issues on the HELLFIRE missile. The team recognized the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their system, and they improved the process using LSS. In their daunting, yet rewarding, task of implementing process improvement and cultural change, they are not alone. They are joined by BG Genaro Dellarocco, Program Executive Officer M&S, who is our organizational leader and LSS champion. Dellarocco literally and figuratively starts every day Lean, and he has created the operational and leadership environment that enables Cavalier and LSS to flourish and culturally evolve at a time when our Army needs it most.

LSS Benefits

It is no secret that our warfighters have more mission requirements than available dollars to meet critical mission needs. Consequently, other Army leaders, such as LTG N. Ross Thompson III, Principal Military Deputy to the

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASAALT), have fostered the deployment and use of CPI tools such as LSS to close the gap between critical mission requirements and total available dollars.

When it comes to critical mission requirements, there is an equally and institutionally compelling need to qualify, quantify, and justify Army capital investment. What most personnel are not aware of is that LSS actually provides project managers and operational leaders with an organized and integral process tool set that provides logical, validated, and defensible financial rationale to make more informed and lasting business decisions. Therefore, in our fiscally constrained environment, LSS provides a proven methodology to reduce operating costs and justify requirements simultaneously, while increasing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of providing products and services to our Nation's warfighters.

With regard to the LSS tools and methodologies, I think we all can slightly modify the old idiom that says "it is poor craftsmen who blame their tools" to what I think is more reflective of the LSS cultural environment—"it is poor craftsmen who refuse to use good tools." Or, maybe a better corollary is that if ignorance is bliss, then some

folks are exceedingly blissful relative to the benefits that can be derived by using LSS tools in their business process environment.



COL Michael Cavalier, JAMS Project Manager, and his team used LSS to address the HELLFIRE Missile Captive Carry project. Pictured here is the HELLFIRE missile. (U.S. Army photo by Deanie Blankinchip.)

PEO M&S LSS Projects

Within PEO M&S, we have many individuals doing LSS projects. We collectively know that project activity, in and of itself, is not enough to achieve the Army's ultimate needs. We see the evolution of revolutionary practices, like those being implemented by Cavalier and his team, as the practical and imperial evidence to move from individual project completion to organizational cultural change, enabling all team members to demand the use of CPI and LSS as integral parts of their day-to-day activities.

True cultural change and its accompanying demands start to take root when leaders, managers, and employees alike begin to attack organizational problems using LSS. For example, Misty Glover, an intern in our Close Combat Weapon System (CCWS) Program Office, used LSS to develop a standardized training template, where none previously existed, for program management, business management, contracting, and engineering interns throughout our PEO. Bill Breffelh, Deputy Program Manager (PM) Non-Line-of-Sight (NLOS), used the same tool set to address and resolve a process problem impacting the public release of information for his program. Then, Darryl Colvin, PM Lower Tier Project Office (LTPO), was able to perform a detailed analysis of contractor workload to his weapon system baseline using that exact same tool set. The result was four people, attacking four different issues, using one common tool set, implementing CPI to achieve cultural change and organizational excellence.

Consequently, beyond the core meat and technical potatoes of any LSS project, there is the pure human element—one where cultural change agents in the ASAALT office use a simple CPI process tool set that many would ignore, discount, or fain, and simply roll up their sleeves and make things better. They did this not because



An SH-60B Sea Hawk helicopter assigned to the "Wolfpack" of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 45 launches an AGM-114B HELLFIRE missile at a small boat target. (U.S. Navy photo by Austin Long.)

they have to, but because they want to. Realizing that beyond providing important operational results or aligning to strategic objectives, they made it better for themselves at the functional level. They achieved incremental organizational change using small process steps to effectively influence their day-to-day activities and contribute to their organization's cultural change.

Collectively, LSS practitioners embrace organizational innovation in a demonstrative manner that declares, for all employees to see and hear, that good enough is just not good enough. They openly state and factually demonstrate that, to quote Yogi Berra, "The future ain't what it used to be." Ultimately, seeking to prove that they are personal and professional change agents, they instinctively know that they made things better for themselves institutionally, while providing more efficient and effective products and services to our Nation's warfighters.

In our JAMS, CCWS, NLOS, and LTPO examples, these projects would never have happened without individual leadership that empowers employees to walk out from the crowded sidelines, lead by example, and try something new. This empowerment leads to achieving organizational innovation by challenging the often ingrained mindset "we've always done it that way" and by actually changing the ways we do business. This ultimately proves that in

the infinite possibilities of outcomes, we have moved the two points of CPI and strategic goals closer together using LSS as the tool set to affect cultural and organizational change.

I hope you found this article worth your time. Please see COL Cavalier's accompanying article, "Lean Six Sigma—Theory to Practice in Joint Attack Munition Systems," on Page 47. We in PEO M&S would like you to read about our other projects in upcoming articles and to participate in CPI to help our Army processes to become less cumbersome.

FRANK J. DE LUCA JR. is the Assistant Program Executive Officer for Strategic Planning and Operations, PEO M&S, Redstone Arsenal, AL, and a retired U.S. Air Force colonel with 31 years of service. In November 2006, he was recruited from industry to be an Army civilian. He holds a B.S. in aviation business management from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and an M.A. in contracting from Webster University. De Luca is certified Level III in program management and life-cycle logistics and holds an LSS Black Belt certification.

