



IDEAS FOR IMPACT.

Featured Article

In this month's edition of **Ideas for Impact**, two of our managing partners-- J.D. and Elmer--explain how real time coaching is the foundation to sustain dramatic gains.



Recently, Bill Jasper-president of UNIFI-sent me the following message:

"David and Victor, just wanted to tell you how pleased I am with our results so far. I have found all of you to be professional and very capable, especially when it comes to generating excitement and motivation in our people. So far the results have exceeded my expectations and I look forward to some really big improvements in the near future."

It's always great to hear that kind of news from our clients. But, what's even more important to me is ensuring that the excitement and motivation Bill mentioned remains at peak levels long after my team has departed. That's what real-time coaching can accomplish for organizations. By designating key personnel who will serve as coaches throughout the critical areas of your business, you can accelerate and sustain the results that flow from a Kaizen event. And that's something everyone can get excited about!

In this issue of *Ideas for Impact*, J.D. Cunningham and Elmer Smith provide some excellent insight regarding the characteristics of a successful real-time coaching program and tips for how you can establish one for your organization.

Here's to ideas you can use to make an impact in your organization,

David Rucker
Rucker & Associates

Real-Time Coaching for Real-Time Results

by J.D. Cunningham and Elmer Miller

Here's a scenario you might be familiar with: After several full days of passionate discussions, inward and outward explorations of process challenges and a meeting of minds regarding a more productive and leaner way to move forward, the Kaizen event has come to an end. Everyone who was involved is excited about the outcome and can't wait to share the newly minted process with the rest of the organization and begin its implementation. And all agree that the event has been a resounding success.

Now, fast forward a month or so. The enthusiasm that was so prevalent immediately following the Kaizen event has naturally waned a bit as everyone has once again focused on the daily tasks of running a business. And, while the Standard Work Instructions and action plan of implementation that were developed during the event are garnering results, there's a problem. Not all employees understand how the new process works. And this can limit the amount of overall progress made not only by individuals-but by the organization as a whole. So, how do you address this? Through real-time coaching that is implemented throughout the entire organization.

When thinking about the role Lean Six Sigma plays within an organization, it's important to remember that Lean isn't an "event." It's a philosophy and an approach that all employees must adopt into their everyday lives. But, in order for this to happen effectively, there must be an owner or multiple owners of this initiative who will champion it within the organization-serving as a coach to others. Because, at the end of the day, being a Lean organization really is about keeping score-measuring success hour by hour, day by day. It's up to these coaches to create an environment in which goals are clearly set, Lean processes are understood and flawlessly executed by all, and success is both measurable and celebrated.

Here are some tips for implementing a real-time coaching program within your organization:

Every six weeks, set aside dedicated time (preferably a week) for designated coaches to discuss ways to manage continuous improvement and for supervisor development.

- During the height of your organization's busiest season, bring in a Lean Six Sigma expert to demonstrate the level of intensity that is required of your frontline management during that time.
- Teach coaches to use a "Kaizen eye" in order to find teaching opportunities in everyday routines.
- In process industries, track success hour by hour and teach supervisors how to respond when an hour is not meeting its specified goal.
- In transactional businesses, track success task by task or project by project and teach team leaders how to evaluate progress at key points along the way.

A Kaizen event is an excellent catalyst for launching a successful Lean Six Sigma mindset within your organization. And establishing a real-time coaching program to support the outcome of that event is the foundation for sustaining it.

For more information about implementing a real-time coaching program within your organization, contact Rucker & Associates at 919.873.1268.

J.D. Cunningham is a partner at Rucker & Associates. He is an experienced operations executive who has worked extensively with manufactures of industrial equipment, medical equipment and automobiles. He wrote the Team Leader's Handbook and Developing LeanSigma Leaders, and he has conducted hundreds of Kaizen Events throughout the world, including Japan, New Zealand, China, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. J.D. is especially sought after for his business strategy insight and for his background and expertise in leading Production Preparation Kaizen Events (2P/3P) for Product and Process Design

Elmer Miller is a director at Rucker Associates. He is also an experienced operations executive in aerospace, materials science and investment casting industries. His Lean experience ranges across manufacturing, service and business process companies in the US and abroad.

About Us

Rucker & Associates helps companies discover dramatic new efficiencies using Lean Manufacturing and Six Sigma improvement methods. We provide hands-on consulting and onsite training to get your improvement program up and running quickly. Our goal is to create an independent, self-sustaining Lean Six Sigma program for our customers.