

Accelerating ROI of Projects to Less than 90 days

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Do the long lead times of project closures compromise your Lean Six Sigma Deployment? If you want to speed ROI recognition, start by taking a hard look at your ability to integrate Lean and Six Sigma with the Rapid Improvement Projects engine, or RIPs.

Lean Six Sigma methods are ideal for virtually every industry. They are also sustainable for the long term. For many companies, however, the improvement in business performance created by traditional process improvement programs can be undermined by long project cycle times. Delivering rapid improvement to the business, even within a single quarter, is expected by today's market.

Little wonder, then, that company executives, impatient over projects that celebrate birthdays, can lose interest and momentum and with it, results.

It doesn't have to be that way.

Here is a typical situation: A project is identified and a team formed to attack the problem. Yet the team members are soon busy fighting fires and performing their daily duties. Progress comes slowly. The project slips down the priority list. Eventually, team members may not remember why they started the project several months ago.

The lesson: Project opportunities using a Value Stream assessment (SPM) to pick the projects that will produce quick wins to supplement the traditional Lean Six Sigma projects. With some time allowed for pre-work and data gathering, a cross functional team can be assembled to execute a RIP event in 3-5 days. The goal of these events is to complete implementation of 70% of the improvements within the event and the remaining 30% in no longer than 90 days. The power of concentrated effort from a highly empowered team can identify improvements and make them happen within a financial quarter.

What can RIP achieve? It can reduce cycle time for equipment shutdown or planned outages, document storage and retrieval, achieve plant layout and flow optimization, deliver equipment maintenance and readiness, cross training, and the standardization of processes, or TPM (Total Productive Maintenance).

By rapidly attacking systematic problems, managers will quickly feel results in terms of improved quality, boosted productivity, quicker lead times, reduced inventories and less downtime. The Rapid Improvement Project engine can reduce cycle times and power results.