

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Lean?

The basic idea behind Lean is that anything that doesn't add value to the customer is waste. Lean initiatives apply innovative tools and iterative continuous improvement to processes so that waste and cycle time can be eliminated, and flexibility can be optimized. Typical Lean efforts examine the route a product or service takes to get to the customer, the handoffs involved, the errors corrected and the delays encountered.

Lean methods were pioneered in the automotive industry and first applied coherently as the "Toyota Production System." They have since been adapted to many industries and today Lean methods are being used with significant results even in service and transactional businesses.

- Pivotal Resources

What is Six Sigma?

Six Sigma is a business management strategy, originally developed by Motorola, that today enjoys wide-spread application in many sectors of industry and government.

Six Sigma seeks to identify and remove the causes of defects and errors in manufacturing and business processes. It uses a set of quality management methods, including statistical methods, and creates a special infrastructure of people within the organization ("Black Belts" etc.) who are experts in these methods. Each Six Sigma project carried out within an organization follows a defined sequence of steps and has quantified financial targets (cost reduction or profit increase).

- Wikipedia

What is Lean Six Sigma?

Lean Six Sigma borrows freely from past quality initiatives such as Deming/Juran 14 Points and Statistical Quality of the 1950's, the Ohno Toyota Production System of the 1960's and 1970's, "Just in Time", "Total Quality Management" and "Six Sigma" of the 1980's, and "Business Process Engineering" and, "Lean Production" of the 1990's. Its strength lies in the combination of tools designed to eliminate waste and the scientific method of analyzing data to reduce variation.

Who uses Lean Six Sigma?

Virtually every industry across the private sector has implemented Lean Six Sigma as the catalyst for broad-scale innovation. Over the last decade, a number of government entities have employed Lean Six Sigma with substantially convincing results to demonstrate that the concept of effectively creating lean systems in government is not only possible, but probable and attainable.

What is the County of Ventura doing now?

Successfully applying Lean Six Sigma requires a long-term view, a consideration of all stakeholders, and must have the active participation of executives, mid-managers, and all staff to be sustained. Steps are in place to deploy the Lean Six Sigma model across the County. A Service Excellence Office has been created as the central deployment unit, training on implementation and facilitation of Lean Six Sigma tools have begun, and initial improvements have been implemented. Check out Our Results!

