

Kaizen Event INSTRUCTION

What is a Kaizen Event?

The word 'kaizen' translates as "change for the better" (kai=change + zen = for the better).

A Kaizen event is a structured team exercise which focuses on creating more value and less waste in an activity or process. It is a knowledge creation event intended to promote the reliable delivery of a product or service. The purpose of a Kaizen event is not to create new processes or products, but to ensure best practices are incorporated into processes, thereby making them more efficient.

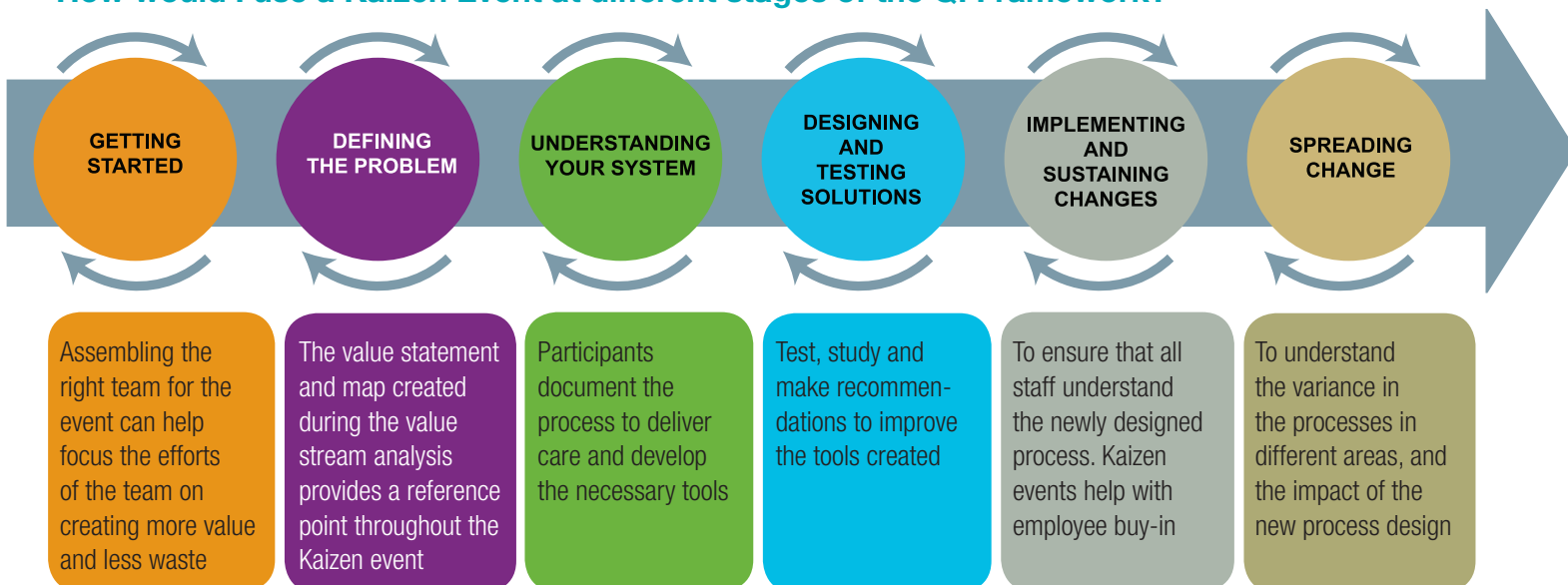
A Kaizen event is ideal if you need urgent solutions to a problem or if you're working on a project that will have a significant impact on care delivery. However, conducting a Kaizen project is a very involved process and requires great deal of effort, coordination and support from organizational management.

Essentially, Kaizen events:

1. Gather operators, managers, and owners of a process in one place
2. Map the existing process
3. Improve the existing process
4. Solicit buy-in from all parties related to the process¹

If, for example, the process under development involves an assessment, then the Kaizen event would include everything from deciding factors that trigger the assessment, to developing the assessment tool, to standardizing the follow-up processes. Participants in a Kaizen event are the people who actually do the work, since they are the ones who understand the workflow and the reasons change is necessary better than anyone else. Thus, a Kaizen event involves knowledge creation and allows a team to move from concept to action. The focus of Kaizen events on making things better but not perfect is liberating for participants as it provides them the opportunity to try and suggest things that are "good enough."

How would I use a Kaizen Event at different stages of the QI Framework?



¹ "Kaizen Event." Six-Sigma Dictionary. 2013. <http://www.isixsigma.com> (July 22, 2013).

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Conducting a Kaizen Event

1. How do I prepare for a Kaizen event?
 - a. Select team sponsor
 - b. Select team leader
 - c. Choose the facilitator
 - d. Choose the team participants
 - e. Develop the team charter
 - f. Gather data prior to the event
 - g. Prepare the organization
2. How do I conduct a Kaizen event?
 - a. Training and kick off activities
 - i. Introduction to Lean and the concept of waste
 - ii. Tools of continuous improvement
 - iii. Identify and Analyze of current state
 - iv. The value statement created during the value stream analysis provides a reference point throughout improvement work. When a team gets “stuck” on what should happen and who should be responsible, we always go back to what makes sense to the client and reflects the value statement.
3. Select priority areas of focus:
 - a. High likelihood of success
 - b. Results will be highly visible
 - c. Has a significant impact to the organization
 - d. Solves operational problems, not management issues
4. Brainstorm, research possible solutions to the problem
5. Select solutions to be tested
6. Establish measures to identify improvement
7. Test solutions and implement those that demonstrate improvement
8. Standardize and sustain changes so they stick
9. Monitor and report results
10. Celebrate

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What do I need to use this tool?

Materials

- Markers
- Butcher paper roll
- Tape to affix paper on cleared wall space
- Coloured sticky note pads in a variety of colors
- Sharpies

Timing

Kaizen events may be 1-5 days in duration depending on the complexity of the process and availability of the right people to engage in this type of work

Setup

- Bright, ventilated space (large room: 12-25 people)
- Clear wall space in the meeting room
- Clear floor space by the wall where the map will be created
- LCD projector and screen
- One laptop per group
- Access to a printer

What tips and tricks will be useful in facilitating a Kaizen Event?

- Designate a sponsor, preferably one that is fully empowered, responsible and accountable for the event from start to finish.
- Develop pre- and post-Kaizen activities so that all participants feel part of the process
- Invite a cross-functional team to the event. This will ensure that the results of the event are disseminated more quickly and achieve faster results.
- Make sure everyone considers participation a priority and contributes as fully as possible. The team needs to carry out any given assignments.
- It is important that everyone has a voice in the design of the future state. Make post-it notes available and invite people to jot down their ideas if they haven't had a chance to speak or haven't been heard (sometimes easy to misinterpret). They can either hand them to the facilitator or post them for discussion.
- People need a chance to think out loud and work their way through a problem. It is common to move the post-it notes numerous times.
- If the team gets stuck, recap the process so far; reflect on lean principles of redesign, the principles of Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO), as well as the value statement.
- As a rule, the future state needs to work 80% time. If the team can get the product or service under review right for 80% of their clients, it frees up time to be flexible for the rest of your clients.