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Bend the Curve CIP-News - April, 2009

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners

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C is for Continuous



These last several weeks have been quite transformative for me, what with the visit of Ken Miller and Blake Shaw.

This was his second visit, and it was quite a treat to have the opportunity to provide some in-depth training and insights on process improvement.

We have all struggled at times with the jargon of Lean and often experience the barriers it can place in front of folks who are new to these ideas. Ken and Blake were able to demonstrate a simpler path that can get us to the same place without the resistance that often accompanies new ideas.

I believe Arthur said it quite well, "He lowered the first couple of steps into the House of Lean."

Ken's presentations brought two big insights for me and, at least, one big difference.

The first insight is best described as liberating—since his methods can enable me to focus more on the improvement work at hand without "worrying" whether I have used the terminology in the right way.

— *Walter E. Lowell*

I was amazed that we could spend two days doing Lean work without actually using the terms we use so frequently.

The second insight is how his approach makes Lean methods and principles more accessible to the staff we are working with.

I am reminded frequently that most folks come to us primarily to help solve a problem, not to learn the latest buzz words circulating in the management-for-hire world.

Anytime we can get directly to the issue at hand without worrying about the language, we enhance our chance for successfully assisting a team.

We are all excited about how we can now use these insights, ideas, and approaches. But, more importantly, about how we can incorporate them into our ongoing practice and training.

DOP certainly will look different next time around, which is to say we have another opportunity to improve it. Improving the course on improving you might say.

April 2009

Volume 4, Issue 4

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Special points of interest:

• Next Clinicals

- › May 15
- › June 19
- › July 17

- Miller workshops planned for Fall.



Cont'd on p. 7 —

Printed & Other Matters

"If customers can not use your products, then you can not achieve your outcomes."

— Ken Miller, *Leading in State Government Workshop*, Augusta, Maine. March 30, 2009.

By the Editorial Board in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, April 7, 2009.

Editorial: State gets 'Lean' ideas from business

Putting employees in the lead produces positive results.

For any Minnesotan who has waited, and waited, for a state agency to respond to a grant application, or duplicate a birth certificate, or pay a bill, here's welcome news: Your wait is getting shorter.

That's the word from a one-year progress report on a state government efficiency program borrowed from private industry. Called "Enterprise Lean," the results are demonstrating that, while government is not business, it can learn a few things from the private sector about delivering services.

"Lean" represents the latest effort by Gov. Tim Pawlenty's administration to create within government some of the same pressure to save money and improve service that competition provides within the business sector. Wisely, this effort relies on employees themselves to identify and implement improvements. It trains employees to analyze their operations and take control of a process of change.

Some of the results claimed by the Department of Administration are striking:

- Birth certificate requests are now processed within 7.5 hours on average, compared with a former average of six days.
- State Soldiers' Assistance applications are approved in 3.7 days, half the former time.
- Processing time for newborn screenings has been cut 56 percent.

Many similar improvements are detailed at www.lean.state.mn.us. It's notable that they aren't accompanied by an estimate of tax dollars saved -- though in some cases, that savings could be considerable. Department of Administration spokesman Jim Schwartz says that's because Lean's top priority is better performance, with cost savings a secondary, salutary benefit. At a time when state government seems consumed with dwindling revenues and reduced expectations, Lean's focus on serving Minnesotans well is a refreshing change.

* * * Forwarded by Tom Bauman, Continuous Improvement Program Leader, State of Minnesota, Dept. of Administration. (tom.baumann@state.mn.us)

See also: Ken Miller's "Running Business Like a Government", *Governing Magazine-Management Letter*. April 2009. <http://www.governing.com/articles/0904kmiller.htm>



From left: Nancy Desisto, DHHS Commissioner Brenda Harvey, Arthur S. Davis, Merle Davis, Walter E. Lowell, and Ken Miller

Commissioner Brenda Harvey Presents Bronze CI-P Certificates to Nancy Desisto & Merle Davis



DHHS Commissioner Harvey took great pleasure in presenting certificates to Continuous Improvement Practitioners Merle Davis (MDOL) and Nancy Desisto (DHHS ret.) during Ken Miller's *Better, Faster, Cheaper* CI -P training. Merle and Nancy are the second and third CI-Ps in *Bend the Curve* to have achieved the bronze certification level of practice. The rigorous requirements for this level include two full weeks of specialized Lean training, active participation in monthly *BTC* Clinical Supervision development sessions, observation/co-leading/leading of several value stream mappings and other Kaizens, a written exam, and the submission of a portfolio of Lean practice.

Congratulations Nancy and Merle !!!

"A true Master is not the one with the most students, but one who creates the most Masters. A true leader is not the one with the most followers, but one who creates the most leaders."

— Neale Donald Walsch

Notes: Clinical Supervision - March 20, 2009

Welcome & Updates

Ann O'Brien facilitated this Clinical. John Rioux scribed.

Announcements /

- Two CI-P's have submitted portfolios for consideration and met the other requirements for the Bronze-level certification: Merle Davis and Nancy Desisto. Others are encouraged to submit theirs as well.

Updates:

- CI-P's were reminded to update their line on the Certification matrix. John will circulate before the next meeting to update electronically.
- There is a study mission to Lonza (Time & Date TBA) in Rockland where Jon Kirsch now works.
- It was suggested there be a discussion at some point of why there are so many CI-P attendees from DOL and so few from DHHS.
- Suggested agenda items for future sessions included:
 - Common Ground event presentation.
 - DOL UI initiative.
 - Requests--how to get them, identify elements.
- Will post opportunities for CI-Ps on wall at the Lean Lab for the CI-P meetings.

Lean Learning: Ken Miller. Chapter 4, The Change Agent's Guide to Radical Improvement

- Time:
 - Emphasizes Elapsed time and work time (= staff time?) and capacity.
 - Lacks value-added and other data sheet elements.
 - Guarantees that you can eliminate 80% of the elapsed time and make it closer to work time.
- Says to change the structure of the process before changing the work itself.
- Questions:
 - How are ranges calculated across the steps?
 - What is the interpretation of 1 unit? One unit = one widget? Role of the Voice of Customer in the concept of one. Widget is one.
 - How to determine granularity of steps—he advocates handoffs as step boundaries.
- Other resources: Robin Lawton's Web site. 8 dimensions (?), C-3 foundation model. (<http://www.imtc3.com>)

Practice: Upcoming Ken Miller Workshops—Arthur

Outcome: For CI-P's to be in a position to know the content of March 30 and 31 and April 1st workshops. There are two roles for the two events. Wants to set expectations for the events and have us be fully informed.

Talking Points:

- Read the list of questions into the room. (Handout)
- Most answers depend on what the person is asking for. Answer depends on if they are at organization or project level intervention point. Important to engage the participants in dialog about needs and possible outcomes.
- Arthur said he will type up the questions and the answers and distribute prior to the event.
- CI-P's requested a list of participants for Monday's Widgets sessions, and Hank agreed to provide for distribution.
- March 31-April 1st "Better, Faster, Cheaper" (FBC) event is for trainers. Will be in role as trainees yet assess for use in our State change system. The idea is for us to learn about the tool in order to assess its use ourselves and for others.

Open Forum

- Discussed several projects underway at DOL and DHHS.
- Discussed that for an intervention where the complaint is that "the room is disorderly" means that "orderly" needs to be defined.

Cont'd on next page —



The Ins & Outs of CI-Ps



★ Welcome back (!!!) to Marcel Gagne and Stephen Crate who, because of work that took them in other directions, had been unable to participate in *Bend the Curve*. They are eager to continue their learning and practice in their journey to CI-P Bronze certification.

Lean Lab: Design Notes

In the February Clinical, some of the CI-Ps expressed their inexperience at writing design notes (as intended for the Measurement modules) and requested a format or template/additional learning experience.

The CI-Ps broke out into four groups, with the task of developing design notes for a typical Clinical Supervision (flip charted). Each group then presented its version. The 4 groups were asked to combine the different versions and ready the "final" draft for presentation at the next Clinical. Clough, Tim, John, and Eric were "volunteered" for their respective groups.

Adjourn

Joan volunteered to facilitate at the next meeting. Steve Crate will be asked to scribe.

The Threes ?

- 3 myths that keep government from radically improving:
 - We don't make widgets.
 - We don't have customers.
 - We're not here to make a profit.
- 3 core measures:
 - Elapsed Time
 - Work Time
 - Capacity
- 3 phases of improvement:
 - Get it.
 - Do it.
 - Live it.

— Ken Miller, BFC Workshop,
Augusta, Maine. March 31-April 1, 2009

C is for Continuous (cont'd. from p.1)

The big difference is that as CI-Ps we must still struggle with the fact that we are not in this game for a quick fix, even though that is often what we are asked to do.

We know full well the "fix" is never quick nor is it ever done, and herein lies the problem.

The 'C' in CI-P stands for 'continuous'. Not only must we be able to demonstrate methods that work, but we must also be able to communicate a strategy that does not stop at the end of Day 3.

Ken said to us, more than once, that BTC is the right strategy, and that is encouraging. We all know what guerilla warfare is all about, but at some point we must get beyond the quick hits — which leads to a final point made by Ken about value.

Said simply, it is the outcome of our work, of our processes, that speaks to what we value.

The 'we' used in this sense is Government.

What is it we are saying about value when we know and can prove we can reduce service delivery time by 80% and don't do it routinely?

We are not in this work for the money. Wall Street and banking pay much better as we now know.

We are in this work to make a difference.

As CI-Ps, we truly know how big that difference can be. We see it every time we finish a VSM or kaizen. Be in no doubt that BTC is sustained almost exclusively by your values.

— *Walter*

BTC Lean Events

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
May 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
June 9-11		Lean Government	Des Moines, Iowa http://lean.iowa.gov	WEL/LK
June 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
July 17	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Aug 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Sept 18	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Oct 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL

* To add or see more events or detail, go to the Bend the Curve Calendar in Outlook's Public Folders.



Department of Health and Human Services

Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

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Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner

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The primary purpose of the *Bend the Curve* Team is to provide support, consultation, assistance, and leadership in process and other improvement approaches and activities for State staff and work teams as they seek to continually improve their work culture, procedures, processes, and environments – in order to meet the mission of the department and the expectations of Maine citizens.

We're on the net!

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc>

<http://www.maine.gov/labor/bendthecurve/>

**Bend
the Curve**

Continuous Improvement Practitioners: BTC Intervention Facilitation Status

More Miller workshops & DOP 1-5 being planned !

Additional workshops with Ken Miller are being planned for this fall. We'll keep you posted.

The intensive introductory CI-P Bronze first level training (DOP 1-5) is being rescheduled to later this year.

You can check the BTC Calendar in Outlook's Public Folders & come to the planning meetings for both.

DHHS		DOL		DAFS	
Kate D. Carnes	IA-L	Jorge A. Acero	O	Rae-Ann Brann	L
Nancy Cronin	O	Michael T. Brooker	IA-O	Wendy Christian	IA-O
Nancy Desisto*	L	Deidre A. Coleman	IA-O	Rebecca S. Greene	IA-L
Jane French	IA-L	Joan A. Cook	CL	Lyndon R. Hamm	IA-CL
James Fussell*	L	Stephen C. Crate	O	Alicia Kellogg	C-O
Marcel Gagne	O	Arthur S. Davis	L	Billy J. Ladd	CL
Julita Klavins	L	Merle A. Davis	L	Michaela T. Loisel	IA-L
Don Lemieux	C-O	Eric Dibner	O		
Muriel Littlefield	C-L	Peter D. Diplock	O	DOT	
Walter E. Lowell	L	Brenda G. Drummond	IA-O	Michael Burns	C-O
Jack Nicholas*	IA-O	Anita C. Dunham	IA-CL	Jessica Glidden	IA-O
Ann O'Brien	L	Karen D. Fraser	IA-L	Rick Jeselskis	IA-O
Cheryl Ring	C-CL	Timothy J. Griffin	L	Robert McFerren	IA-O
Terry Sandusky	L	Gaetane S. Johnson	IA-O	Sam McKeeman	C-O
Clough Toppan*	CL	James J. McManus	IA-CL	Jeffrey Naum	IA-O
Helen Wieczorek*	IA-O	Scott R. Neumeyer	IA-O		
		Bruce H. Prindall	IA-L	DEP	
OPEGA, Legislature		John L. Rioux	L	Carmel A. Rubin	IA-O
Matthew K. Kruk	IA-O	Sheryl J. Smith	L		
* Community CI-P		IA - Inactive	C - "Champion for Lean" - not facilitating		
L - Lead		CL - Learning Co-Lead		O - Learning Observer	