

12-1-2012

Bend the Curve CIP-News - December, 2012

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalmaine.com/mdol_btc_news

Recommended Citation

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners, "Bend the Curve CIP-News - December, 2012" (2012). *MDOL Bend the Curve Archive*. Paper 53.

http://digitalmaine.com/mdol_btc_news/53

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Labor at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in MDOL Bend the Curve Archive by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact statedocs@maine.gov.

December 2012

Volume 7, Issue 12

Third Friday Series: Critical Thinking

Inside this issue:

Workshop Learnings	2
Ins & Outs of CI-Ps	4
Lean TIPS	7
Schedule of Lean Events	7
BTC & CI-P Listing	8

Special points of interest:

- Next Clinicals
 - December 21
 - January 18



Sam McKeeman, Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services-BHR, led a special four-hour *Critical Thinking* seminar on Friday, December 21st. Though within the framework of Bend the Curve's monthly Clinical Supervision, this morning session of Clinical was also attended by non-BTC participants from the private sector.

Sam defined critical thinking and discussed the various behaviors that are evident with critical thinkers. Using brief activities, he also explored some of the skills that are needed to think critically and discussed the circumstances where critical thinking is needed.

You might enjoy the following comments from some of the participants.

* * * * *

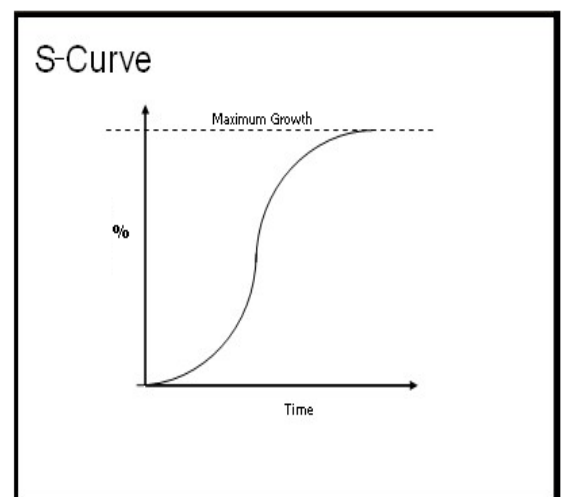
Anne Connors
Maine Center for Disease Control, DHHS

I very much enjoyed Sam McKeeman's Critical Thinking workshop, particularly the distinction between problem solving and problem prevention. The exercises around predictable processing errors were eye-opening and made me realize how important it is to be mindful of one's own assumptions—and those of one's workplace—when undertaking a project.

Jon Kirsch
Lonza Rockland

This training is an excellent re-enforcement for the way we should all be thinking during our day and the way continuous improvement should be done. Too often we will want to go with the way that is "the norm", while Critical Thinking requires that we think about what we really want to achieve and how we really want to do that.

If everyone within the organization understands what Critical Thinking is, it would become acceptable to ask those questions that make some feel uncomfortable, while still maintaining our direction. Critical Thinking also requires Critical Listening, doesn't it? This would be a very good class to have prior to Kaizen. Thanks, Sam – excellent presentation.



Critical Thinking Seminar – led by Sam McKeeman

David J. Back OpEx & L6S

I thought this workshop was excellent. Sam covered a lot of high-quality material in a relatively short amount of time.

It would appear that we used to focus on Lean tools and then realized that Lean thinking was the prerequisite. Now it becomes clearer that critical thinking is a prerequisite and an integral part of Lean thinking.

Sam presented a very clear and insightful workshop on a very critical, and often overlooked, aspect of Lean transformations. The workshop took the group through the concepts of Critical Thinking and the behaviors required to make the most use of this concept, integrating the experiences of a diverse group to illustrate the importance of CT and how it can be used to facilitate group processes.

By discussing both the strategic application and practical application tips, this was a tremendously useful “package”. He clearly showed the value of bringing critical thinking forward as a precursor to any improvement activity or to a group of stakeholders before an improvement initiative kick-off.

By spending time on the definition and behaviors of CT, it became clear how we can use this and how to avoid some of the (poor) habits that we all tend to have.

The discussion on the details of CT application went well, focusing on the learning points without getting into the weeds of specific cases.

Adding the related topic of the “S” curve in the final session helped to provide more insight on implementation.

I suspect that CT is a very complex (but critically important) topic, Sam made the understanding easy, which is a sign of a good teacher. Thanks, Sam.



Andrews L. Tolman Maine Center for Disease Control, DHHS

Sam McKeeman led a lively discussion of Critical Thinking. This is a topic that we all think we know but often haven't taken apart and looked at how it can be applied to our Lean efforts.

Sam led the group through a series of concepts and small exercises that helped us be more clear about how an attitude of mindfulness and truth-seeking is a real asset in our daily work. He was also quick to point out and talk through the risks of being a truth-seeker and questioner.

A piece that was particularly helpful for my thinking was his discussion of the Modis Curve, which describes the cycle of a lot of processes: an early stage involving a lot of effort and organization, a 'B' phase where the system is working well and results accumulate progressively, and a 'C' portion where the curve flattens and the cycle has run its course.

In a Learning Organization, or a good Lean group, innovation happens while the 'B' phase is still ongoing, so that the next high performance cycle overlaps the previous.

Critical Thinking Seminar — Comments Continued

Jim DeMint Goodwill of Northern New England

I found the seminar supportive and informative. The presenter, Sam McKeeman, was down to earth.

Some of my takeaways included:

- ◆ Pay attention—listen and observe.
- ◆ Critical thinking is fact based; opinions may not be.
- ◆ There are problem solvers and problem preventers.
- ◆ People can work without a boss.
- ◆ Criteria has to be agreed upon.
- ◆ Tone carries the message.
- ◆ It is important to have a diverse group in any problem-solving activity.
- ◆ The art of discovery is important in Lean events.
- ◆ Credibility is crucial.
- ◆ Purposeful questions need to be asked with the correct approach.
- ◆ Context clarifies meaning.
- ◆ There is a difference between leading and managing.

Questions I left with that our Goodwill Lean team will pursue:

- ◆ How does creativity fit into critical thinking?
- ◆ How to control members of the team with weighted influence?
- ◆ How to influence without authority?
- ◆ Who decides what is relevant?

It was a meaningful seminar, and we appreciated the opportunity to participate.

Check out the following website of the Critical Thinking Community:

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>

Nancy E. Cronin Maine Developmental Disabilities Council

The Critical Thinking workshop was a very centering experience for me. It brought me out of my current world of systems change enough to remind me that self-reflection IS part of the work. As far as my key learnings:

- ◆ Decision making is not waiting for all evidence to present itself, but enough evidence to make informed choices.
- ◆ Being a critical thinker includes tolerating ambiguity. However, being a critical thinking leader often demands defining the process so that others can feel grounded through the ambiguity.
- ◆ Critical thinking is a discipline that involves constant self-reflection.

Lita Klavins Office of Continuous Quality Imp., DHHS

Among his many learning points and thought-provoking activities, Sam stressed the importance of paying attention, continuously learning (of finding your groove not a rut), aligning yourself with a defined “True North”, and becoming a problem preventer (rather than just a problem solver). Sam noted, “We are what we *frequently* do.”

Sam strongly emphasized that the time to take innovative action is not when the organization’s S curve levels off or declines (the organization/individual realizes their growth is leveling off or declining) but during its upward growth curve.

He noted that Critical Thinkers may not always be seen as good members of the “team” and so pointed out the need for understanding context, using the right tone, self-reflection and keeping an open mind, and listening to others.

Printed & Other Matters: S-Curves, Innovation & Forecasting

"Although s-curves started from studying natural ecosystems, it soon became apparent that they could be equally successful in modeling non biological "populations" using the same basic principles from population ecology. [Everett] Rogers was one of the first to bring s-curves into the marketing field by introducing the Diffusion of Innovations Model. Here, the populations are innovations of any kind; a new product, market, technology, an idea, or anything new that can be adopted by a potential audience. This is made through the word of mouth process. Take the evolution of Internet, for instance. At any time, in any given country with population "N", there are "A" persons that have adopted the new technology and use the internet and N-A that have not. However, when users and non users meet, there is a probability that the non-users will learn about the benefits of the Internet and will eventually start using it. When the Internet penetration in the country increases more than 50% then the potential new users are fewer than the existing users, hence, growth starts to decline. This is a simplistic but valuable explanation of the evolution of the Internet, which by the way does indeed follow an s-curve pattern [http://www.growth-dynamics.com/articles/End_Internet_Boom.htm]. Since the late 70's Cesare Marchetti (<http://cesaremarchetti.org>) and afterwards Theodore Modis (www.growth-dynamics.com) described in their extended studies how various processes such as product sales, competition among products, stock prices, the use of different means of transportation, energy consumption, and even urban guerrilla activities could be approximated by using forecasting models based on logistic growth."

As the study of the Logistic Growth evolved through the years, it generated additional models based on the same principles. Frank Bass went one step further from the Diffusion of Innovations Model, in his paper "A new product growth model for consumer durables", published in 1969 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bass_diffusion_model]. He created the famous Bass Model by incorporating another growth driver, the innovation, which describes the process of adopting something new spontaneously, either by following an innovation urge or due to the exposure to marketing communication. This is something different than the word of mouth (or imitation-process), already introduced by Rogers, which calls for physical contact with someone who has already adopted, for instance, a new technology."

— **George P. Boretos.** *S-Curves and their Applications in Marketing, Business, and the Economy.* Keeping Informed. MRA's *Alert!* Magazine. February 2012.. http://www.forecastingnet.com/Alert_0212_34-39.pdf

Theodore Modis, Ph.D. Predictions - Society's Telltale Signature Reveals the Past and Forecasts the Future. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1992.

Evolution of a system under limitation of resources through time.

That is, the natural life cycle phases of various phenomena can be modeled by an S curve: birth, growth, maturity, decline, and death. Or, as Modis described, growth, saturation, and decline (or the four seasons). According to Modis, the future can be forecast from the beginnings and the beginnings can be deduced from the endings.. The simple (and visually easy to understand) phases of this logistic S curve are shaped by data points charted on a graph.

Lean TIPS



- Encourage & foster a learning environment.

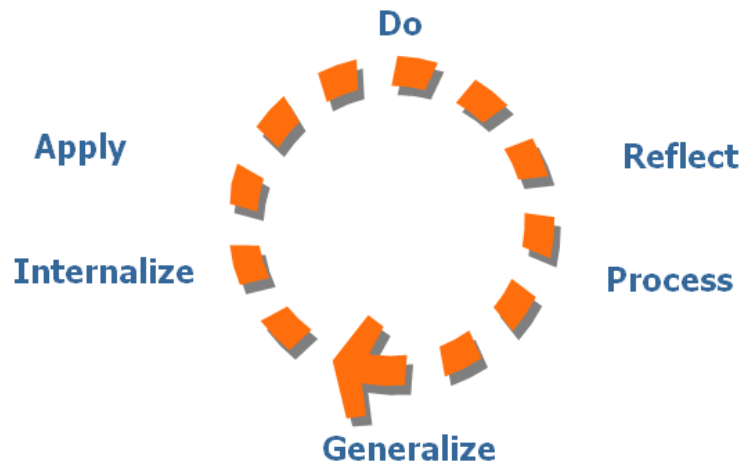


- Expect continuous improvement leadership at all levels.



- Make decisions at the lowest possible level where knowledge, application, and need converge.

Experiential Learning Cycle



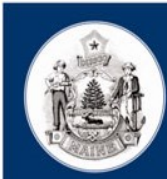
Incrementalism is innovation's worst enemy.

— *Nicholas Negroponte, MIT Media Lab*

BTC Lean Schedule

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
Dec 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision—Critical Thinking w/ Sam McKeeman	Main Conf. Room, MDOT	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Jan 18	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	M. Martin Room, MDOL	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Feb 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
March 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
April 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
May 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
June 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
July 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Aug 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD

* 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

Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

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

BTC Contact:

Julita Klavins, M.S.W.
207-624-7933
lita.klavins@maine.gov

Office of Continuous Quality Improvement
Maine Department of Health and
Human Services
2 Anthony Avenue
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011

FAX: 207-287-9351
TTY: 1-800-606-0215



BTC Calendar

You can check the *Bend the Curve* Calendar in the State of Maine's Outlook Public Folders for continuous improvement meetings, Clinicals, trainings, and other events.

Continuous Improvement Practitioners: BTC Intervention Facilitation Status

DHHS		DOL		DAFS	
Kate D. Carnes	C	Joan A. Cook	I-LL	Dennis Corliss	O
Nancy Cronin	C-O	Merle A. Davis*	L	Sam McKeeman	C-O
Theresa Dube	O	Eric Dibner	LCL		
Marcel Gagne	LCL	Timothy J. Griffin	L		
Julita Klavins*	L	John L. Rioux*	L		
Jerrold Melville	LCL	Sheryl J. Smith	C-O		
Kristopher Michaud	O			Sec. of State-BMV	
Ann O'Brien	L			Scott Thompson	O
Terry Sandusky*	L	Univ. of Maine			
Bonnie Tracy	C-O	Kim Jenkins	O	DOT	
		Brynn Riley	O	Michael Burns	C-O
		Ghassan Saleh	O		
				OPEGA, Legislature	
				Matthew K. Kruk	I-O
Community – Private Sector					
Rae-Ann Brann	L	James Fussell	I-LCL	Douglas Patrick	O
Arthur S. Davis	C-L	Ted LaCrone	O	Anne Rogerson	C-LCL
Ericka Deering	O	Walter E. Lowell*	L	Clough Toppan	C-LCL
Nancy Desisto*	C-L	Henry B. McIntyre	C-LCL		
Town of Durham, NH					
		David Kurz	C-O	Steve McCusker	C-O
		Michael Lynch	C-O	Todd Selig	C-O
* Certified-Bronze CI-P					
I - Inactive		C - "Champion for Lean" - not facilitating			
L - Lead (LL-Learning)		LCL - Learning Co-Lead		O - Learning Observer	