

# The Lean6sigma Seven Step Change Model

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HUMAN CAPITAL ASSOCIATES

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### MANAGING CHANGE TO ACCELERATE LEAN6SIGMA

Where do you want to go with your business? How would you define the “results” you are seeking? Is the change strategy clearly articulated to enable the organization to accomplish the results you seek? Are you measuring progress in terms of quantifiable results? Are you holding key individuals accountable for delivering results and accomplishing change? When people succeed or fail, what are the consequences, positive or negative?

Changing your organization to be more customer-focused, employee-involved and capability enriched takes courage. As an effective leader, you must not only be able to clearly articulate where you are going, but also guide people in how to get there. Lean6sigma is a powerful enabling tool for your organization, but how can you accelerate the change?

#### Clarify

When you initiate and lead change, an absolute imperative is to clarify what the change activity is all about and why it is important. In a broader business strategy context, focus your start on clearly identifying key customers for your products and services. A key leadership responsibility is clearly articulated vision and direction, but critically important is clarity of expectations, behaviors and first steps. In any change effort, expect to encounter resistance and actively work to clarify the reason for change or your level of dissatisfaction with the current state. Then focus on and consistently, clearly communicate the vision for the future state and what the organization, your leadership team and you personally must do to move in that direction.

- ✓ What are your key products and services?
- ✓ Who are your customers?
- ✓ What is your business strategy and how does it connect to your key products and services and your customers?
- ✓ What is your vision for your company?
- ✓ What capability gaps exist between your current state and your desired state, your vision?
- ✓ What are your key reasons for wanting to change your organization?

## Commit

Developing commitment starts with clarity of vision and direction, involvement and alignment. As a leader of change engage all parties in open conversation and dialogue to seek and obtain commitment to fully understand the change effort and to address it. Provide training and education to encourage understanding and personally engage in these events to model your level of commitment. Focus your leadership education to develop specific actions with clear accountability. As a leader, hold people accountable for successful completion of these actions and the personal behavioral changes they and you must make. Deal with individuals who choose not to demonstrate commitment.

- ✓ Is your leadership aligned and committed?
- ✓ Are you prepared to devote your best resources to this effort?
- ✓ Have you established aggressive goals?
- ✓ Are you prepared to fund this effort for success?

## Choose

With clarity of and commitment to change, it is important to choose the right change agents. Committing your very best, the future leadership of your organization full time to this change effort is another critical demonstration of commitment. If you are focusing the organization on strategic change to reposition your business, simply stated – what is more important? This change initiative must have your best resources. With your best resources, now you must choose the right projects by clearly defining and understanding your value streams.

- ✓ Who are the right people to serve as champions and black belts?
- ✓ What are the most representative and business significant value streams?
- ✓ How will you spend your time in supporting this effort?
- ✓ What personal contribution can you make?

## Characterize

How ugly is your baby? Too personal for your business setting or a necessary reality check. When you release your very best people to identify problems and opportunities, expect the status quo to be aggressively challenged. Commitment will be challenged as problems, undesirable effects, are identified. Most of these issues will be rooted in the 4Ps – policy, process, people and place where work is done. Commitment will further be challenged as project-staffing needs are identified and a bias for action is installed.

- ✓ Based on value stream analysis, identify the right problems and opportunities.
- ✓ Define the cause and effect relationships for these problems.
- ✓ Create urgency through a Plan-Do-Check-Act mentality.
- ✓ Select the right projects based on both short and long term need.
- ✓ Select the right people to staff the projects on near full time basis.
- ✓ Define the financial target for each project.

## Capture

Show me the money, the results and the overall progress in the change effort. The tone of accountability becomes critically essential at this stage of change. The delivery of results and the communicating of success will further accelerate your change effort. Furthermore, capturing the gains shifts your effort to self-funding. As a leader of change, you must focus on burning the bridges to the past – removing the old policy, process, people and place where work is done.

- ✓ Develop and work project plan, with focus on speed, to deliver results.
- ✓ Scoreboard and visually model the project's journey.
- ✓ Monitor time and resources with diligence and passion.
- ✓ Identify and address ways to sustain the gains, financial and organizational.

## Celebrate

Plan time to celebrate and thank people for their contributions to success. It is important to understand that recognizing and celebrating success helps drive organizational commitment. As a leader of change, celebration is the positive aspect of recognition, but you must also establish consequences where failure occurs. Additionally, the celebration events are excellent springboards for engaging the organization in discussion and identification of new opportunities for continuing improvement – the pursuit of perfection.

- ✓ Recognize and reward results and those who participate in project efforts.
- ✓ Identify and address ways to create an open and encouraging environment.
- ✓ Promote visibly those who understand and are delivering in a manner consistent with the change effort.

## Communicate

While listed last as part of the 7C's for change, communication must be actively addressed at each step. Focus on the key messages – why are we changing, to what are we changing and how do we need to change. Be consistent in these messages and recognize you will become tired of delivering the message before the organization necessarily believes the message. The proverb like statement – walk the talk, accentuates this reality. Engage the organization to identify key stakeholders and most effective vehicles of communication. Remember, communication must be two-way so design your efforts to encourage and elicit feedback.

- ✓ Communicate, communicate and communicate, consistently and repetitively at and during each step of the change process.

## Conclusion

Accelerating change requires a focused, dedicated effort. The seven-step methodology – clarify, commit, choose, characterize, capture, celebrate, communicate, provides structure and discipline in a working model for you and your organization. As you consider the model, obviously clarify and communicate are key launching points in your change effort. Additionally, don't lose sight of the need for communication throughout the model, not just at the end. Beyond that, consider the model as reinforcing or expanding in terms of the leverage being created to accelerate change. Each step builds upon the previous one and when you encounter serious resistance to the change effort, check your status on the previous steps. For example, if you are beginning to choose change agents – champions, black or green belts – and the organization is reluctant to identify and bring forward the very best candidates, revisit commitment and be certain education and understanding are in place and personal commitment to the change has occurred.

## ABOUT HUMAN CAPITAL ASSOCIATES

Human Capital Associates (HCA) has been helping businesses realize enterprise excellence for over a decade. To achieve the highest level of performance, HCA helps organizations become faster, leaner, more effective, and more efficient using a proven, powerful combination of Lean and Six Sigma—lean6sigma<sup>SM</sup>. It's how we do it that makes the difference. Our unique 3C<sup>SM</sup> approach pinpoints *customer* value, creates an enabling *culture*, and builds on your organizational *capability* to accelerate business performance and achieve sustainable results. Our record speaks for itself— with documented client savings and revenue growth of over \$7.5B.

### Colorado Springs

Robert Blaha  
 719-590-1171  
 rblaha@hca.com

### Atlanta

Charlie Johnson  
 770-642-0052  
 cjohnson@hca.com

For more information about Human Capital Associates or to visit our Web site, navigate to [www.hca-leadership.com](http://www.hca-leadership.com).

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Human Capital Associates  
1155 Kelly Johnson Blvd., Suite 110  
Colorado Springs, CO 80920  
[www.hca-leadership.com](http://www.hca-leadership.com)  
719.590.1171

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