Glossary of Terms

Six Sigma – In its most simple sense, Six Sigma is a highly disciplined approach to decision making that helps people focus on improving processes to make them as near perfect as possible. The term "Six Sigma" relates to the number of mathematical defects in a process. Six Sigma practitioners focus on systematically eliminating the defects so they can get as close to "zero defects" as possible. Done properly, Six Sigma ensures that internal processes are running at optimum efficiency.

DMAIC – Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control. DMAIC indicates the steps applied to a product or process during a Six Sigma implementation.

Lean – A strategic methodology that aims to streamline production by minimizing or eliminating waste, which in turn keeps down costs and allows processes to be completed faster and with fewer resources. Lean manufacturing focuses on preventive maintenance, quality improvement initiatives and flexible facilities, personnel and supply chain management.

DFSS (Design for Six Sigma) – A structured approach for designing product or service processes. DFSS is based on variations of the steps Define, Measure, Analyze, Design, Verify. Like other Six Sigma strategies, DFSS is data-driven; it is an integral part of a successful Six Sigma Quality Initiative. Another variation of steps in the DFSS model is IDOV (Identify, Design, Optimize Verify.)

TRIZ – Developed in Russia, TRIZ is the Russian acronym for Theory of Inventive Problem Solving. TRIZ is an approach to problem solving that seeks to view each problem as a system, and isolate elements within the system that can be fixed or improved to reach the desired end. TRIZ seeks to improve the process of innovation by recognizing the universal principles of invention and applying them to product creation and improvement processes.

Change Leadership – The ability and conviction to initiate and supervise a business-wide change project even when the project might have consequences that are unpleasant. Change Leaders use careful research and data collection methods to create fact-based initiatives, then they recruit strong teams from within the organization to plan, generate support for, and implement the change.

Hoshin Kanri – A management philosophy that originated in Japan and focuses on identifying key strategic changes necessary to meet future needs. Hoshin Kanri methodologies are used to suggest, prioritize and monitor Six Sigma projects as part of a company's Total Performance Improvement initiative. Hoshin Kanri uses set rules and forms to create a systematic approach to Six Sigma implementation within the framework of a company's overall strategy.

Total Performance Improvement – The confluence of management philosophies to create a holistic change framework. Total Performance Improvement focuses on the smooth integration of a company's product and process improvement initiatives to achieve company wide benefits in efficiency and quality. Companies that strive to achieve Total Performance Improvement combine Six Sigma and related methodologies with an organizational commitment to the change and improvement process. The result is a streamlined business with processes that eliminate waste and maximize quality output, often to the tune of millions of dollars in savings and increased revenue.

Six Sigma Leadership Terminology – The Six Sigma belt system originated at Motorola and is patterned after stages of mastery in the martial arts.

Master Black Belt – Master Black Belts are Six Sigma Quality experts that act as leaders to drive change initiatives within an organization. They have deep knowledge of the principles and processes of Six Sigma, as well as related concepts and methodologies such as Lean, TRIZ, and Design for Six Sigma. Master Black Belts are qualified to teach Six Sigma Black Belts, Green Belts, Yellow Belts and Champions the methodologies, tools, and applications in all functions and levels of the company, and act as resources for applying statistical process control to projects.

BMG's Master Black Belt program combines in-depth coursework with rigorous testing and a required demonstration of Thought Leadership through publication and teaching.

Black Belt –Black Belts are team leaders responsible for the implementation of a Six Sigma project. They know how to define and successfully launch a project, how to transition it from phase to phase, and finally, how to complete a project and evaluate its success. They are adept at applying analytical tools to problem solving, and in utilizing Six Sigma methodologies in an overall approach to process improvement. Black Belts often provide guidance and training to Green Belts, and in turn, receive guidance and training from Master Black Belts.

BMG's Black Belt training process is a robust 24-day program spread over five months. During this time, Black Belt trainees take concepts learned during courses and apply them to real company projects.

Green Belt – Green Belts have in-depth knowledge of the Six Sigma methodologies and are integral members of the team. They play an important role in executing Six Sigma projects on an organizational level, and have a strong familiarity with existing company products and processes. They are adept at defining, staffing, presenting, and gathering and using data to analyze Six Sigma projects.

BMG's Green Belt training consists of two intensive 5-day training sessions. Between sessions, students return to their companies to apply the tools and processes of Six Sigma to their own projects.

Yellow Belt – Yellow Belts generally have some knowledge of Six Sigma, but do not act as the sole project leader. Yellow Belts participate in Six Sigma projects as subject matter experts, core team members and process map developers. They are often involved in applying the principles of Six Sigma to smaller process improvement projects within the framework of a larger implementation.

Champion – A company leader or senior manager who is responsible for identifying projects, allocating resources and ensuring proper training for leaders involved in Six Sigma implementations. BMG's Champion Training focuses on teaching deployment leaders how to properly identify Six Sigma projects, foresee potential project obstacles, and set realistic expectations that ultimately drive financial results.

For more information on any of these terms please call us at 303-827-0010.