

In sharing their lessons learned from this process, the event team noted the following positive aspects were critical to the success of the kaizen:

- Diversity and expertise of team members
- Open and honest participation
- Appropriately defined scope
- Sub-teams—useful for dividing and conquering the kaizen workload
- Day-1 training—essential for team building and alignment
- Effective facilitation

The team also noted that the process could have worked even better if the following items had been considered and addressed in advance:

- Accessibility of stakeholders during the kaizen week
- Ensuring kaizen team members realize that this is a full week commitment
- Team members need to be allowed to participate without interruptions
- Kaizen support must be communicated throughout the organization

- Additional support resources need to be readily available

The AOP BPK team proved that it is possible to implement lean concepts for the financial reporting and budgeting processes in an organization, to the benefit of all. The benefits realized from the AOP process were also implemented for the company's quarterly business review process. If you haven't considered applying LeanSigma to your financial operations, now is the time to do so. ■

NEWSNOTE

TBM Partners with Catalyst Business Systems

As part of our ongoing strategic commitment to improve our consulting services, TBM continually seeks new ways to help guide our clients through the evolving challenges of a more demanding business landscape. To that end, we are pleased to announce our partnership with Catalyst Business Systems—a lean consulting firm also based in North Carolina. Catalyst is perhaps best known for its technology solutions for lean transformations, bringing significant savings in cost and effort to organizations embarking on, or fully vested in, the lean journey.

These solutions simplify and reduce the administrative pain associated with the execution of strategy initiatives and enterprise metric tracking within any organization, while at the same time driving greater levels of accountability and transparency throughout an organization. We are pleased to offer the following modules to our current and future clients:

1. Strategic Initiatives—Following the roots of the Hoshin Kanri process, this application includes the integrated components of the x-matrix, metric tracking, action plans, and countermeasures. Additional features such as daily management dash boarding, date-change reporting, resource loading ,and roll up/down reporting drives the organization to address strategic initiatives as a daily management activity rather than a monthly or yearly event.
2. Stand-alone enterprise metric tracking—Every organization needs to keep tabs on critical metrics. The metric enterprise tracking module allows for daily, weekly, monthly, and/or quarterly reporting of metrics with integrated action plan and countermeasure functionality. Performance dashboards, resource allocation reports, and task management features provide real tools for daily management of these critical metrics.
3. Fully configurable share database—Get the value you deserve from the best practices, ideas, and knowledge within your organization. Our fully configurable database solution provides a simple input process combined with a robust, industry-proven search capability that goes well beyond the limited capabilities of share drives and corporate intranets.

These web-based solutions are designed and tested by those who live the processes every day, combining the discipline of the theory with the reality of implementation. By using the most up-to-date development technology we can offer easy-to-implement solutions that require little to no IT support.

We are pleased to be at the forefront of value-added technology solutions and welcome the founders of Catalyst, Mike Heath and Sheri Nemeth, as managing directors into the TBM family. Heath and Nemeth are lean industry veterans who created Catalyst after many years at Danaher.

We believe this partnership creates a dynamic opportunity to improve client results by integrating Catalyst's unique technology into our current consulting practices.

—Anand Sharma

