

Six Sigma – The Leverage Phase Part 7

DMAIC - LEVERAGE

Together, we have delved into each step of the DMAIC Cycle for Six Sigma in order to address the value and form, fit and application in your environment. In the previous publication, we focused on the “C” in the DMAIC Cycle. We discussed the processes and tools utilized to CONTROL the new process. This issue will focus on the value of LEVERAGING success. When LEVERAGING improvements, many different aspects of the business should be considered. Don’t limit yourself to just your area. Below, figure one shows a list of most commonly seen areas that may benefit from the LEVERAGE step:

Too often we have seen where a good idea in one part of the plant has the potential to garner equal or greater savings in another part of the plant; however, there is no process in place to share between areas. If we are missing the “in plant” leverage, can you imagine what we are missing plant to plant within the same company?

Figure 1: Leverage Matrix

Leverage	Possibilities	Investigate (who, when)	Results	Next Steps (who, when)
Lot to Lot <i>Same Part Type</i>				
Part Type to Part Type <i>Same Machine</i>				
Machine to Machine <i>Same Process</i>				
Process to Process <i>Same Product</i>				
Product to Product <i>Same Department</i>				
Department to Department <i>Same Product Family</i>				
Prod Fam to Prod Fam <i>Same Plant</i>				
Plant to Plant <i>Same Region</i>				
Other				
Other				

Figure 1 is a simple manual checklist that is used by each team at the end of each project to ensure we consider leverageable items from the project. There are many different methods for sharing data between plants for capturing “read-across” potential. The system that works for each individual plant may vary.

[Click here for an Excel version of the leverage matrix](#)



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P.O. Box 23031, Knoxville, TN 37933-1031

Phone 865.323.3491

Fax 865.288.3304

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LEVERAGE TODAY

You should not wait for a perfect system to begin the leveraging process. Manual systems are just as effective as expensive automated systems, so start something TODAY. In the Leverage Matrix shown in figure one, we consider other areas of leverage. If there are possibilities identified by the team, we assign someone to investigate, determine possible results, and recommend the next steps to the team. The DMAIC project cannot be closed until this list is completed.

Another critical step in the LEVERAGE phase is to REFLECT on the project and consider the SYSTEMIC breakdown that may have led to the failure addressed by the project. Often times, there is a system issue that is manifested as a problem. By attacking the systemic issue, one is able to see the savings resulting from improving the current condition while avoiding future problems.

The LEVERAGE phase of Six Sigma helps multiply success across an organization. At this point in the process, the information is clear in our minds, so now is the perfect time to apply what we have learned. If too much time is allowed to pass after the completion of the project without LEVERAGING the lessons learned, one will miss out on the read-across potential. Challenge your teams today to make their improvements “MULTIPLIABLE.” Give them a LEVERAGE system that makes it easy to do the right thing.

We at DRIVE have enjoyed sharing the DMAIC-L process with our readers. If your company would like to solve long-standing problems, we offer foundational, intermediate, and advanced level problem-solving including practitioner certifications. For a no-obligation introduction meeting, please contact Paul Eakle at paul.eakle@driveinc.com or 865-323-3491.

