KAIZEN IN GOVERNMENT

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Background

It is seen that government organizations from local governments, state departments, ministries, municipalities, defense forces to big national agencies are increasingly focused on improving their performance. Citizens are demanding change.

In order to improve, many Governments are turning towards Kaizen to become Lean.

Kaizen is a culture, a way of thinking and a set of tools – which are tried, tested and often used by business to boost performance. They are doing so by cutting waste to improve service delivery and reduce costs. At the core of Lean is the spirit of Continual Improvement/Kaizen. This culture of continual improvement is applied on the ground (not in seminar rooms!) and is best applied by the real people who manage and handle daily work.

Kaizen

‘Kai’ Means Change and ‘Zen’ Means for better (or incremental) i.e. Change for Better or Incremental Change. Kaizen is at the heart the Lean philosophy.

Lean Management or Kaizen methodology helps streamline processes and office environments, where most of the inefficiencies occur.

This becomes possible only if people in the organization are given the right Lean skills & have the right capabilities.

Opportunities

The typical office has lots of opportunity to build upon, for eg:

- Lots of hidden waste.... in the form of rework, searching, double filing, duplication of efforts; processes with long lead times, information 'overload' etc.
- Leads to dissatisfaction to both internal and external customers as service delivery is often not On Time, In Full or Error Free (OTIFEF)
- Which in turn leads to waste of all resources: People, Space, Utilities, Material, Machines
Better services and more value for the taxpayer’s money! We also see that Lean government is a means to expand the capacity of government to provide more services per unit of investment. Apart from this there are few other benefits like:

**Benefits**

- **Improved public service** (time to delivery and quality of service)
- **Improved work flow and service to internal customers**
- **Release of space converted for other purposes**
- **Better organized workplaces in a number of offices**
- **Saving of costly national resources**

**Most critical – An ENERGIZED PUBLIC SERVANT**

*How Kaizen / Lean works in governments?*

It follows learning by doing approach and focuses on improvements; followed by sustenance. It occurs only at the real place (the office!), is driven by the real people (staff!), by tackling real issues (pain areas!) in real time.

The objective should be to build Lean & Fit public service organizations. Kaizen Institute supports this by leveraging the 4P model of Kaizen, which is applicable to public service organizations.
The first two P focuses on actual improvements while the third P focuses on people. The key is to train & engage them.

The reason this 4P model has caught the attention of various government organizations is because it is simple, robust and action-oriented; it is practical, swift & very low cost! It is a proven approach - in India & outside! It is not about forming committees that table reports and findings!

The 4P model is the essence of Kaizen as applied to public services.

**How Kaizen/Lean works in governments?**

The 4P model is the essence of Kaizen as applied to public services.

- Sensitize Top Management
- Train Champions
- Train all officers and staff

- Five S Implementation
- Visual Management
- Office Live

**People Involvement**

- High Power Committee
- Government Regulation review

**Policy Review**

- Swim Lane Process Mapping
- Throughput Time Reduction

**Physical Workplace Improvement**

- Five S Implementation
- Visual Management
- Office Live

**Process Improvement**

- Swim Lane Process Mapping
- Throughput Time Reduction

The 4P model is the essence of Kaizen as applied to public services.

**Conventional Govt.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Engagement, Continuous Improvement, Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Excessive approval gateways, marred accountability, decision-making by committee, difficulty in gathering proper information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
<td>Measured &amp; calculated, often anticipated using scenario planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>Measured by volume of input &amp; output (quantity), hampered by indecisiveness &amp; aversion to risk.</td>
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<td>Attitude towards change</td>
<td>Threaten conformance, culture, and habits.</td>
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<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Dependents within the system; confrontational relationships</td>
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Source: WHO country reports

**Lean Govt.**

Source: WHO country reports
Where is this being applied?

India: Gujarat State–The Education and Health Department have applied/deployed it
Government of Mauritius, Kenya, African Union Council, Revenue Authority of Tanzania,
and Economic Department of Dubai (UAE) are other clients of ours.

Conclusion

Waste is everywhere and the need for improvement is unlimited. Developing a formal
structure to implement Kaizen for driving a Lean Culture is a welcome step that should be
taken by all Government organizations.
Excellence is a journey and not a project.

Masaaki Imai
Founder Kaizen Institute

About Us

Kaizen Institute is a global pioneer and knowledge based organization which provides consulting, coaching and training
services to companies represented in Europe, Asia-Pacific, Middle-East, Africa and America. Kaizen Institute Africa (KIA) is
the Africa business unit offering its services to companies in the public, service, and manufacturing sectors, focusing on
organizational change, lean manufacturing, and continual improvement implementation. Interestingly KIA strongly
believes in practicing what it preaches. We strive hard to apply Kaizen in our own day to day business.

Kaizen is a journey and not a destination
and it requires a very high degree of top management commitment.