

KAIZEN

Course Outline

Description: There will be no progress if we keep doing things the same way. Through education, learning and experience, we are actually embracing continuous improvement, which in Japanese is KAIZEN (pronounced KY'ZEN). KAIZEN is simply continuous, incremental improvement in every aspect of life. Kaizen aims to make small, incremental improvements in processes and systems leading to substantial long-term benefits. This strategy is the single most important strategy in Japanese management - the key to their competitive success. The suitability and applicability of KAIZEN concepts are not limited to the manufacturing environment only.

Number of Lessons: Three

Hours to take the Course: 3-4 hr

Lesson 1: What is Kaizen?

The Kaizen process is based on the PDCA or Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle. This process begins with the identification of a gap in what is expected, or what is desired. Kaizen is a continuous cycle of improvements that will lead your organization to make some long-term fixes that can reduce waste in terms of materials, resources, and time. Learners will understand the meaning, principles of kaizen, and different types of kaizen while knowing what it takes to share the Kaizen philosophy with others.

Questions to ask:

- What is the definition of kaizen?
- What are the principles of kaizen?
- What are the benefits of kaizen?
- What are the different types of kaizen?

Lesson 2: PDCA – Problem solving with kaizen

The power of kaizen lies in solving problems. Learners will learn about Plan Do Check/Study Act (PDCA) and how rapid PDCA cycles are important to developing a culture of continuous improvement. This continuous cycle of improvement leads to a culture of innovation, employee engagement, and progress toward your company goals.

Practice Questions:

- What is PDCA?
- Explain scientific thinking and how it relates to PDCA.
- Give an example of a real life PDCA cycle.

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Lesson 3: Facilitating a Kaizen

We will discuss the many different ways to use kaizen initiatives in any organization. Learners will begin to understand the difference between daily kaizen and kaizen events with practical examples. Learners will also understand basic facilitation techniques for in-person and virtual kaizen events. Facilitating a Kaizen requires the ability to resolve any conflicts that may arise, misunderstandings, and lack of alignment. Effective communication, listening, and negotiating skills are key along with respect and empathy.

Suggested Activities and Homework:

Begin conducting small experiments using rapid PDCA cycles. Seek out opportunities to facilitate a kaizen event in your organization.

1. Kaizen event charter
2. PDCA experiment template

Practice Questions:

- What are the different types of kaizen?
- What are the success factors for a good kaizen event?