Impact of Lean Training Workshops

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INTRODUCTION

As public health laboratories continue to be challenged to do more with less, many have looked at using Lean principles to improve processes, eliminate waste, and increase efficiency. To assist member laboratories in gaining practical knowledge about Lean processes the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), provided basic and advanced Lean training. To document the influence of that Lean Training, an impact survey of attendees was conducted in November of 2014.

METHODS

A ten question post course evaluation was sent to past participants from the two 2012 basic trainings and the 2013 advanced training to measure the impact that the training had on their work. Participants were asked if they had used knowledge obtained from the training to conduct any types of lean assessments in their laboratories, what Lean elements or tools had most aided them, what specific laboratory activities or processes had been improved and if they had trained other staff on any Lean concepts or procedures.

"We have 8 major Lean projects in the pipeline for the next year."

RESULTS

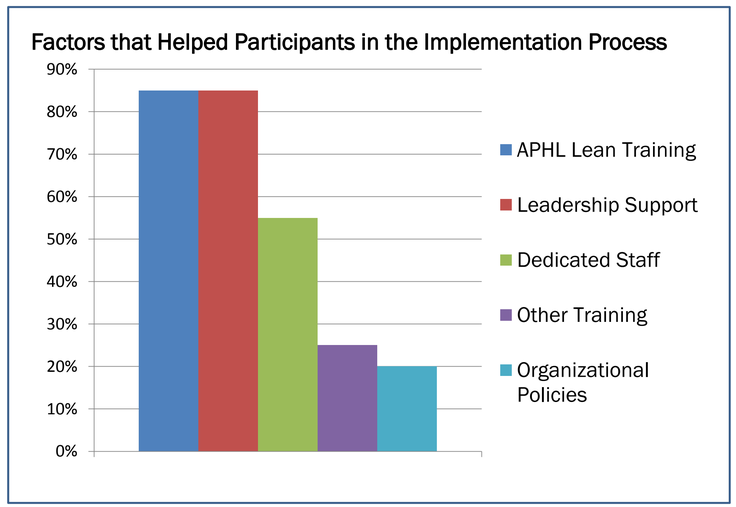
The majority of respondents (91%) have made changes in their laboratory with 80% stating that this was based on knowledge gained as a direct result of the training.

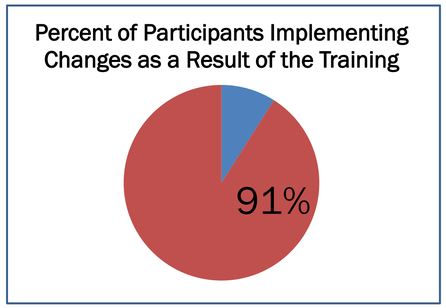
Reported barriers to implementation include:

- Staffing shortages
- Looking for additional training
- Time
- Relocation

"The APHL Lean training provided an excellent background for bringing Lean into the laboratory"

Value Stream Mapping





"The 5S tool has made workflow more efficient and has put our laboratory in a place to generate more revenue."

Most Impactful Lean Training Concepts Identified

- Small improvements can have a big impact on efficiency, quality and savings.
- Developing Standard Operating Procedures will reduce the possibility of human error.
- Perform evaluation before and after implementation.

Most Impactful Tools Used

- 5S and 6S (Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize, Sustain + Safety)
- Gemba walks
- Return on Investment
- Process Flow Charting
- Plan-Do-Check-Act
- Value Stream Mapping

"Lean has been incorporated into our Strategic Plan."

CONCLUSION

By participating in the Lean trainings, 91% of respondents were able to conduct some improvement processes in their laboratories, 36% had trained others, and 77% were planning to implement changes within a year, showing that the investment in training was beneficial to many Public Health Laboratories.

Improvement Processes Conducted:

- Daily huddles
- Single piece flow
- Value stream mapping
- Spaghetti diagrams
- Rearranging work areas

For More Information

For more information on Lean and other quality improvement topics, refer to www.aphl.org, Education, Pre-recorded Webinars, for available APHL-sponsored learning activities and trainings.

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