OSLER

Maximize your organization's resources: practical tips for process improvements

NOVEMBER 11, 2025 3 MIN READ

Related Expertise

- Franchise
- Osler Dash®

Author: Julia Farr

Key takeaways

- Regularly monitor and refine processes to ensure continuous improvement.
- Leverage industry-best practice methodologies like Lean Six Sigma to keep your processes efficient.
- Measure existing processes through inventory, mapping, and visualization to identify impacts and variations.

Regardless of whether your franchise system is large or small, an efficient and lean approach to managing your operations enables you to maximize your resources. Often processes develop naturally over time and with organizational growth and aren't subsequently reassessed to ensure they continue to be the best possible approach.

Thankfully, there are standards and industry-accepted best practices that your organization can follow to develop efficient processes or to improve existing ones. The most widely recognized methodology is Lean Six Sigma which combines lean principles that focus on waste reduction with Six Sigma that emphasizes variation and defect reduction. Lean Six Sigma has a variety of key concepts that can be leveraged depending on your specific needs, but their core framework used for process improvement is DMAIC, which stands for Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control. Using the DMAIC methodology for structured process improvement, let's consider some practical tips when undertaking an initiative to improve a process within your organization.

Define the problem

- Set clear and realistic objectives and KPIs
  - What are you trying to accomplish by reviewing your systems and processes? There could be many different motivators ranging from cost savings, improving quality, reducing mistakes, maximizing resources or implementing technology.
  - Try following a SMART framework when setting goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound).

- If possible, try to set success metrics early on that can be measured after implementation. For example, reducing time from step A to step C by # hours.
- Engage the right stakeholders
  - Who are the internal and external stakeholders impacted by your systems and processes? This can include customers, people with accountability over certain tasks, technology users, suppliers, etc.
  - Tailor your engagement strategy depending on the stakeholder role. For example, a decision maker may not need to know operational details and will be more interested in the return on investment (ROI)/net benefit of any proposed system changes. A person responsible for a task that is likely to be impacted may need to understand how any potential changes will benefit them to avoid a negative response.

Measure

- Inventory your existing systems and processes
  - Measure the impact of those systems and processes and prioritize what will have the biggest impact on your organization.
- Process mapping and visualization
  - Map out consecutive steps in processes and highlight who is involved; what action they're responsible for taking; any inputs such as decisions that impact how the process flows; and any related data or documents including where it's stored or processed by a technological system.
  - Understand where variations might happen in the process and try to land on a standard that can be followed by all, if applicable.
  - Document process steps in a visual chart such as a flowchart, detailed process map or value stream map.

Analyze and improve

- Streamline or re-design processes
  - Review your process map with your team to ensure it is accurate and determine if there are opportunities to make it more efficient.
  - Can any steps be consolidated or eliminated? Can any steps be reorganized in a way that more efficiently leverages your resources? Can technology or automation help?

Control

- Monitor and refine as needed
  - Monitor your processes and systems for compliance and any visible output of improvements.
  - If you set any KPIs, evaluate and compare your results. Keep in mind certain improvements may take time to produce a noticeable positive impact.
  - Review semi-regularly with your team and be open to any future continuous improvement.