

Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

For the June 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014, reporting period

Agency name: Employment Security Department – WorkSource Skagit, Whatcom, and Whidbey

Improvement project title:
Scheduling and Communication

Date improvement project initiated:
10/20/2014

Summary:

Using Lean methods, employee scheduling and communication processes were improved, resulting in increased efficiencies, a reduction in staff time and improved communications.

Description of the problem: The staff scheduling process was an antiquated, multi-step process. The schedule was created by a supervisor then posted on paper in a cubicle. Anytime there was an absence, unexpected departure or conflict, staff had to consult with the supervisor, and the supervisor marked up the paper schedule with a pen and reposted it. Staff had to continually check in throughout the day to see changes to work assignments.

With only one supervisor for three WorkSource Centers, staff needed a vehicle to share important updates and communications everyday across offices.

Description of the improvement: In order to empower employees to take care of their own business and make decisions on their own, it was necessary to eliminate the paper schedule. The supervisor now creates a weekly schedule and uploads it to a shared network drive. All staff has access and can download a copy and update as needed. Because the supervisor cannot be in all three offices at the same time, a “morning huddle” is now being held at the office where the supervisor is that day, and staff from the other two offices call in. The supervisor asks each group to report on any changes that they made to the schedule or workload in order to handle the day’s business. The supervisor then edits the schedule.

Specific results achieved:

This improvement led to better coordination of front-end services for WorkSource customers. Prior to improvements, staff estimated they were spending approximately a half hour every day going in and out of the supervisor’s cubicle checking schedule changes and asking questions about work assignments. Now, each employee spends five minutes in the morning huddle, working together as a team to address the day’s needs. They feel empowered to manage their own work, are more prepared to meet customer needs, feel more valued as professionals and function more effectively as a team.



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How we involved customers or stakeholders in this effort:

All staff was engaged in this improvement project, providing valuable input and expertise.

Contact person/s:

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