

# Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

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



**Agency name:**

Office of Financial Management

**Improvement project title:**

Employee Survey Administration Process

**Date improvement project initiated:**

09/22/2014

**Summary:**

The State HR Division of the Office of Financial Management held an improvement workshop on the Employee Survey Administration Process. OFM and agency process owners analyzed the value stream from the time the survey planning begins in February to when the links are delivered to the customer in October. The review was prompted because the frequency of the survey has doubled from every two years to every year with no new resources.

**Details:**

Description of the problem: The Employee Survey has recently doubled in frequency to every year. Because of the frequency change and no adjustment to resources, there is a need to review the process and make adjustments for an annual implementation.

The pain points included:

- What agencies are considered “Executive Branch” changes yearly. Additionally, there is no current list of agencies that can be utilized out of the box.
- Response from agencies verifying their contact and needs is low. When agencies are thought to be identified for the process, only approximately 50 percent of those agencies respond with contact and needs within the requested timeline.
- Agency needs for added survey questions: It sometimes takes a lot of time to identify agency-added questions because State HR considers question wording, strategic value, and respondent anonymity before adding questions to the survey.

Description of the improvement: Value stream mapping workshop planning occurred from July to August 2014. The workshop was held in September, 2014. Deliverables from the workshop were current state value stream map, an implementation plan to achieve targets and a Kanban board template. Three improvement areas were identified in the workshop and selected for implementation. These included:

**1. Communication of Special Needs Requests**

Only fifty percent of agencies identified their needs by the due date. Problems included agencies not understanding the requests, or thinking it didn’t apply to them.

**Countermeasure 1a:** Develop a standard template/format for survey-related communication that can be tested with the agencies.

# Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

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



**What have we learned:** The team is currently working on developing a process to follow for each communication to the agencies. They are testing the materials with customers and gathering feedback early in the process before broad distribution. Improving the clarity of the communication message and centering the message around the customer needs was tested for one of the communications around reporting out the survey results. This process will be used in the development of communication templates for the next survey round.

**Countermeasure 1b:** Develop an automatic Outlook reminder notification to help agencies remember to reply. (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

**Countermeasure 1c:** Develop a standard communication on how to report agency contact changes. (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

**Countermeasure 1d:** Develop an escalation process (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

**Countermeasure 1e:** Host a survey kick-off meeting where agency contacts can ask questions, get answers and learn about the overall process. (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

## 2. Communication Review of Kickoff and Communication Package

The process contains a lot of waiting and rework by multiple parties in OFM and other agencies.

**What have we learned:** The team is reviewing and documenting the hand-offs from the previous survey cycle to better understand the amount of handoffs and the changes as a starting point for process improvement ideas.

**Countermeasure 2a:** Develop a template for the Kickoff and Communication Package including standard visual branding. (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

**Countermeasure 2b:** Clarification of roles including the contact that is handling the internal coordination. (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

## 3. Contacting the Right People

There are multiple challenges with keeping track of which agencies are participating in the survey. The agency list changes regularly with legislation and consolidations. Agency deputy directors and agency survey contacts also change throughout the year. This causes searching, waiting, and handoffs in order to determine who is participating and what their needs are.

# Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

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



**Countermeasure 3a:** Identify a standardized process to maintain a master list of agencies.

**What we've learned:** This issue does not seem to be unique to this project. The team is looking into existing systems and distribution lists that contain organizations and staff roles, such as deputy directors to see if there's an existing resource already available or the best starting point.

**Countermeasure 3b:** Investigate the concept of a standardized survey that is distributed to ALL employees. (No work has been dedicated to this effort)

Specific results achieved: This process is only executed annually, beginning in February. No measurable results will be available until the next cycle is in process.

Goals include enabling the process to double in frequency (meet increasing demand) without adding resources, decrease rework associated with non-timely responses, better process to determine which agencies are in scope of the survey, increase transparency to enable cross-training load-leveling, improve communications to prevent rework, waiting and not timely responses.

## **How we involved customers or stakeholders in this effort:**

Customers of the process in OFM, Department of Enterprise Services, Board of Accountancy, Parks Department, and Military participated in the value stream mapping workshop and will assist, as needed, in testing improvement ideas. They have already been tapped into testing communication drafts.

## **Contact persons:**

Tim Norris, [Tim.Norris@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:Tim.Norris@ofm.wa.gov)

Pamela Singleton, [Pamela.Singleton@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:Pamela.Singleton@ofm.wa.gov)