



Walsall apply Business Improvement Techniques (BIT) Methodology to their Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Process and realise immediate savings

Summary

The West Midlands Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership have enlisted the help of NAC Group with whom they are working in Partnership to deliver improvement across the region by applying Business Improvement Techniques Methodology across a wide range of services.

NAC Group have developed the Service Excellence Programme of Lean Consultancy and training which is specifically designed to tackle the issues identified by Gershon, Varney, the White Paper and CSR07.

The Service Excellence Programme involves taking a team with knowledge of a particular process, applying Lean principles to analyse the process and identifying concerns and opportunities for improvement. Through the BIT NVQ Training in Lean productivity improvement techniques, solutions are developed for areas of concern providing measurable, sustainable improvement while creating a more enjoyable environment in which to work and embed a culture of continuous improvement.

Improvement through efficiency

West Midlands **LGA**
local government association



Project Background

The first step in kicking off the project was a Productivity Needs Analysis (PNA) which identified key areas of opportunity and gathered data to measure the impact of training and improvement activities.

The current CRB process in Walsall Council was nominated as a good area to tackle and an in-depth analysis was carried out with the aim of identifying and implementing improvements that address current problem areas. A cross-functional team of 12 people was involved on this project and included members from the CRB, Operational and IT Support areas.

Objectives

The key objectives for this project included:

- Provision of a good service
- Reduction of overall lead time
- Correct completion of forms
- Increase in potential income
- Creation of an environment and skill-set within the team to allow for the transfer of skills across the organisation
- Evaluation of programme impact and development of a sustainable strategy

Role of the West Midlands Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership

Part of our role on the BPI Programme is to facilitate training in West Midlands Authorities that will integrate learning in the Business Improvement Techniques (BIT) level 2 NVQ with measurable improvements in personal and organisational effectiveness. The focus will be on two key areas identified in the Gershon report;

1. Back Office functions (clerical & admin)
2. Improving productive time to create a waste free process

Benefits

- Total annual cost savings achieved to-date is £13,834 with a further £5k being identified as immediate savings on the action plan
- A total annual saving of 1,376 hours (26 hours per week) which has the potential to increase income by taking on agency work using the released hours
- A simplified and improved CRB process was developed allowing for a reduction in the number of process steps, process time and cost
- The proposed new process was formally documented and recorded for use in ongoing process improvement activities

- Particular focus was placed on standardisation of both the documentation and the overall process across services resulting in increased data accuracy and reductions in processing and delay time. These documents were developed and implemented by the team.
- Everyone on the team awarded Business Improvement Techniques NVQ Level 2.
- Potential future improvements identified include the use of the IT Portal and transfer of the CRB process to the 'One-Stop-Shop'.
- Improvements to the quality of service included a reduction in the 'not right first time' amendments needed to CRB forms. These improvements went from 11% to 6% during October 2007 and Walsall expect to reach and maintain a 'zero-change' target in the future.
- 4.6% savings on total costs covering labour, material and overhead budget in the department.

Critical Success Factors and Lessons Learned

Through the NVQ2 training during which they demonstrated and applied the knowledge directly into one of their Service Areas, the Team now have the knowledge and skills necessary to continue improvement activities into the future.

A detailed action plan was developed to ensure all identified improvements are realised on an ongoing basis and that measurement methodologies are used to assess the benefits of the improvements.

Transferability

The whole process of improvement is transferable to other processes within the remit of the CRB and Operational Team at Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council.

Using the Visual Management techniques from the NVQ a simple scorecard has been developed by the team so the ongoing improvements are assessed against the overall aim of Customer Service Excellence.

For information and signing up for BIT Training

Jane Daly
Programme Delivery
West Midlands Regional Improvement
& Efficiency Partnership
Tel: 07917 242884
E: jdaly@wmcoe.gov.uk