



Lean Six Sigma *at the Cross Roads*

**Challenges and Pathways for
Boosting Lean Six Sigma Returns**

Sound Familiar?



**“Do it
faster!”**

**“Give me back my
best and brightest!”**

**“Can we stop
reinventing
the wheel?!”**

**“Do it
cheaper!”**

“Do more!”

**“Tell me again,
what’s in it for
me?”**

**“We don’t have time
for this, I’ve got
a business to run!”**

How do I get bigger and faster results while sustaining Lean Six Sigma principles and disciplines that drive long-term cultural change ?



Research Project



LEADERS

PURPOSE

1. Survey 'Mature' Lean Six Sigma deployment leader's perspectives and experiences on meeting the Results / Culture challenge.
2. Test Hypothesis about a 'Formula' for sustaining Lean Six Sigma success.

PROCESS

Email Survey w/Telephone follow-up
- 10 Questions

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Stimulate dialogue for advancing a Best Practice Model for sustaining Lean Six Sigma success.

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Participating Companies

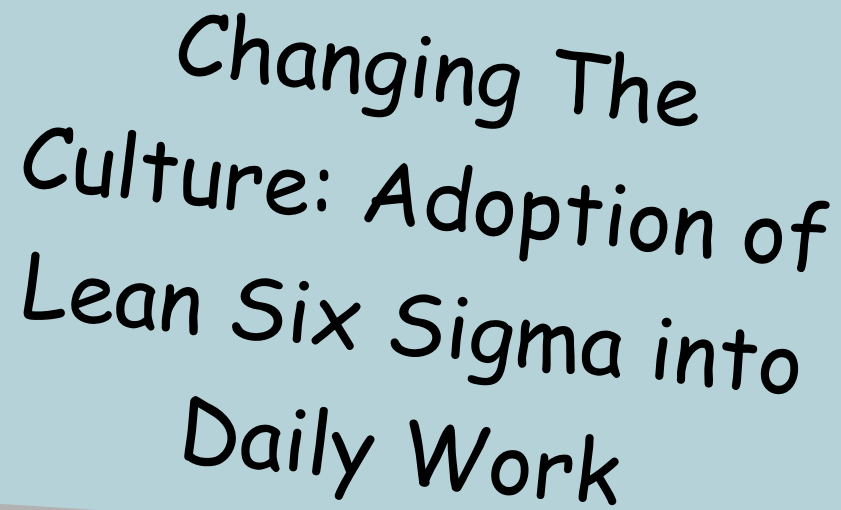


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The Survey Questions

1. What is the biggest challenge you are faced with as a Lean Six Sigma Deployment Leader/Champion in your organization?
2. Once you get beyond the basics (*Leadership Commitment to Deploy, Belt Recruiting and Training, and Infrastructure for Managing Projects*), what are the key drivers for boosting Lean Six Sigma results and sustaining the culture change?
3. How do you measure Belt effectiveness?
4. In your experience, what's the average cycle-time required (*in days*) in most Deployments for completing a Black Belt DMAIC project?
5. What is the percentage of Green Belts that actually complete projects after training?
6. In your experience what is the biggest gap or deficiency in Belt capability that hinders performance?
7. On an annual basis, after at least two years of Deployment, what percentage of managers and employees outside of the Belts typically contribute to completing Lean Six Sigma projects.
8. Did your Deployment employ a formal process for capturing Just-Do-It or Quick Win improvement opportunities? If so, what is the method(s) used?
9. Did your Deployment employ a formal process for Replication of Global Solutions across the organization? If so, what is the method(s) used?
10. If you could make one improvement in your organization's Deployment to boost Lean Six Sigma Total ROI, what would it be?

- 1. What is the biggest challenge you are faced with as a Lean Six Sigma Deployment Leader/Champion?**



*Changing The
Culture: Adoption of
Lean Six Sigma into
Daily Work*

"We welcome new initiatives that support continuous improvement (*often introduced by new leaders*), but we struggle with the potential confusion and division this creates."

"Leadership often has the mindset of 'Just-do -it the easiest way'. It's tough to battle this short-sighted thinking."

"The toughest challenge is getting senior leaders to see Lean Six Sigma as more than just a lot of productivity improvement projects."

2. What are the key drivers for boosting Lean Six Sigma results and sustaining the culture change?

*Project Selection is #1:
Must be aligned to
strategy, relevant
metrics tie-in, and
validated results*

*#2: Recognizing and
communicating
accomplishments*

“Whatever is the key management process in the company for driving the strategy, Lean six Sigma needs to be linked.”

“There needs to be ongoing and multiple channels of communications about Lean Six Sigma accomplishments to keep it alive in everyone's mind.”

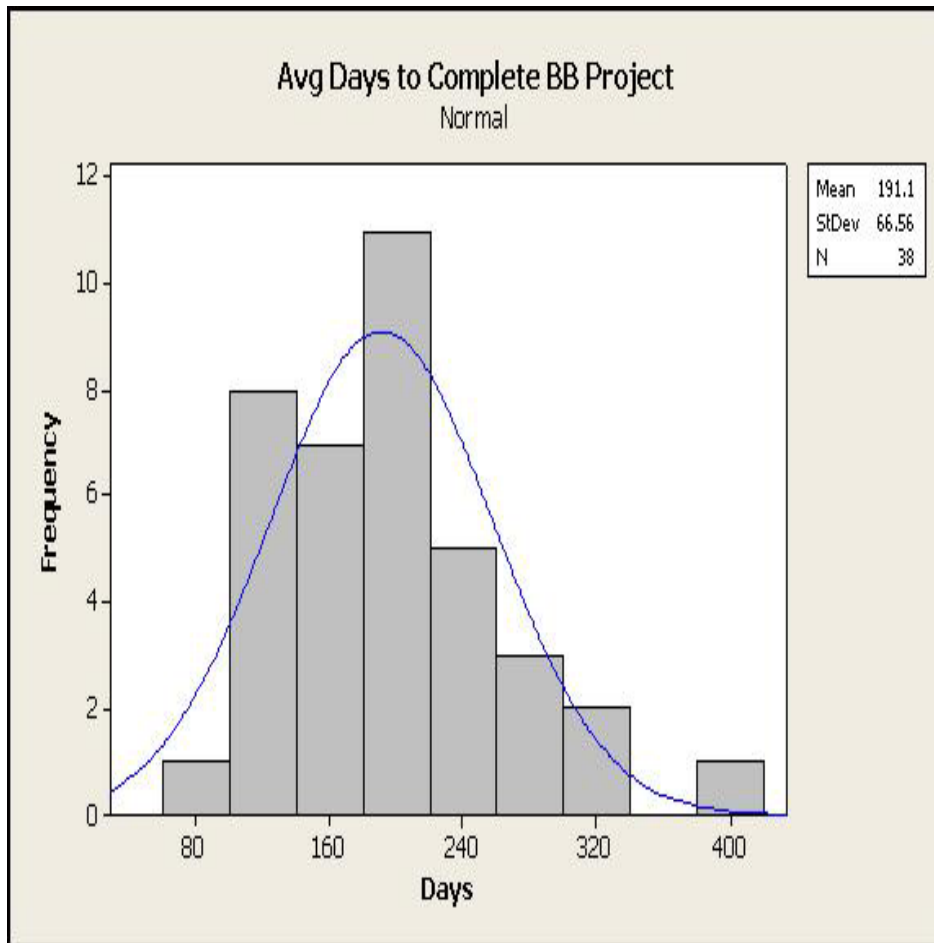
“It's not about the MONEY, but it always boils down to showing the MONEY to the top.”

3. How do you measure Belt effectiveness?

- 
1. Projects Completed
 2. Savings
 3. Project Cycle Time

“It’s simple: The number of projects completed and the dollar savings achieved is the benchmark.”

4. What's the average cycle time required (*in days*) for completing a Black Belt DMAIC project?



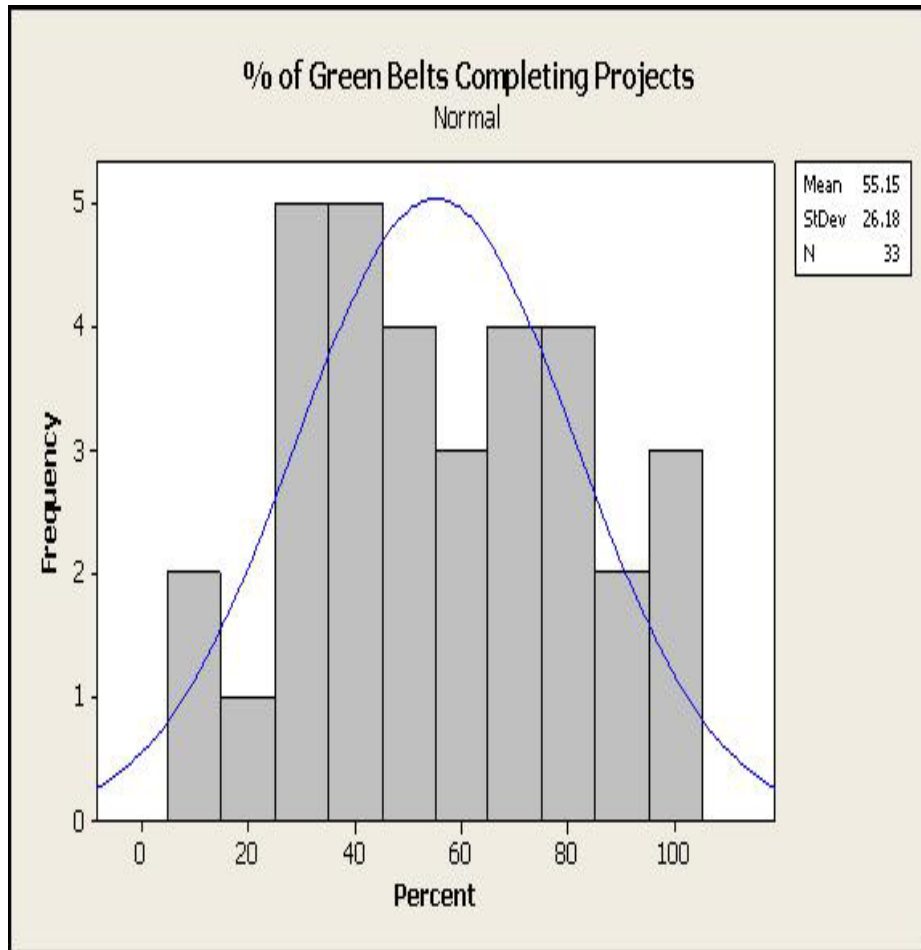
- ✓ **Six Months is the Norm**
- ✓ **Range reflects differences in scope & practitioner skills**
- ✓ **Appear to be few standards**

“Average project cycle-time may no longer be the right metric because project cycle-times varies by the objective, scope and methods used.”

“In general, it just takes way too long!”

“We think all projects should be moving to 60 to 90 days to completion.”

5. What is the percentage of Green Belts that actually complete projects after training?



- ✓ **50% is the Norm.**
- ✓ **Completion rate vary based on types of training and requirements for certification.**
- ✓ **Large variation in skill requirements for Green Belts.**

“Green Belt project completion is not nearly where it should be but it’s getting better.”

“We’ve changed the requirements to reflect the bigger range of projects we are now addressing which has helped the completion rate.”

“The bigger issue is that most of our Green Belts are one and out ... one project completion and then out.”

6. What is the biggest gap or deficiency in Belt capability that hinders performance?

Project management skills and time availability for part-time Belts to complete projects

Soft skills: facilitation of meetings, leading team members, coaching up and down

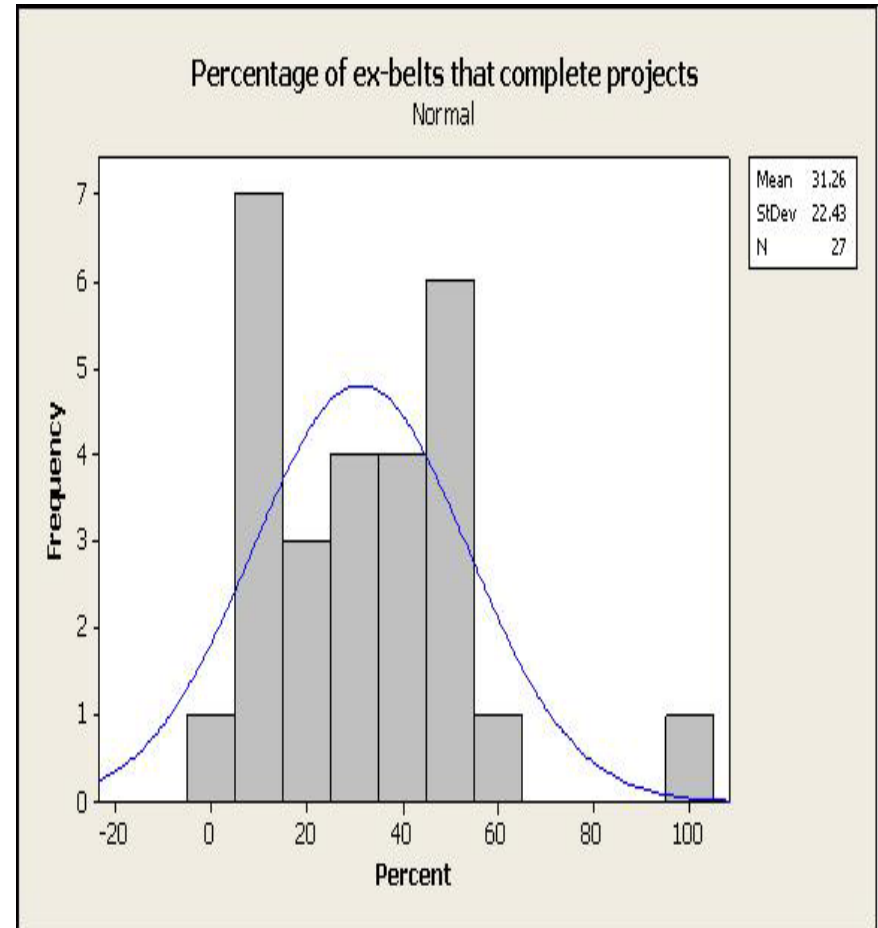
“It’s very tough to screen, train and coach the soft skills that make or break Belt success.”

“The bigger gap is often Project Sponsor capability - not the Belts.”

“Unless Belts work full-time, it’s nearly impossible for them to master the advanced statistical tools.”

7. What percentage of managers and employees outside of the Belts typically contribute to completing LSS projects?

- ✓ **Norm is 30%.**
- ✓ **Many organizations do not measure.**
- ✓ **Half of respondents made an estimate.**
- ✓ **Company reporting 100% uses Process Management structure.**



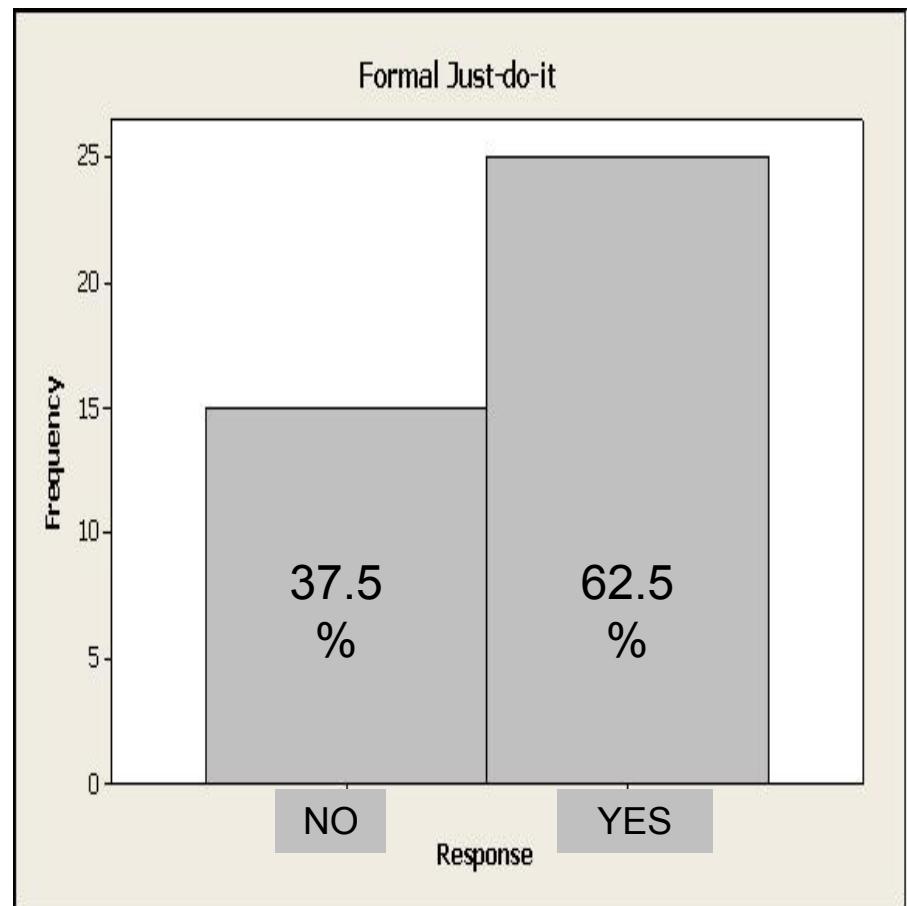
“This is important but tough to measure. One way is number of Belts or training saturation but I think this misses the point.”

“Too hard to answer - no metrics.”

“Lots of spread with this one ...some organizations are at 90% ...while others are at 10%.”

7. Did your Deployment employ a formal process for capturing Just-Do-It or Quick Win improvement opportunities? If so, what is the method(s) used?

- ✓ **Many of the “YES” respondents said they tracked 'Just-Do-Its' in their project tracking system, but ...**
- ✓ **Few are using a structured improvement approach.**
- ✓ **Methods mentioned:**
 - DM_IC
 - Rapid Lean Six Sigma



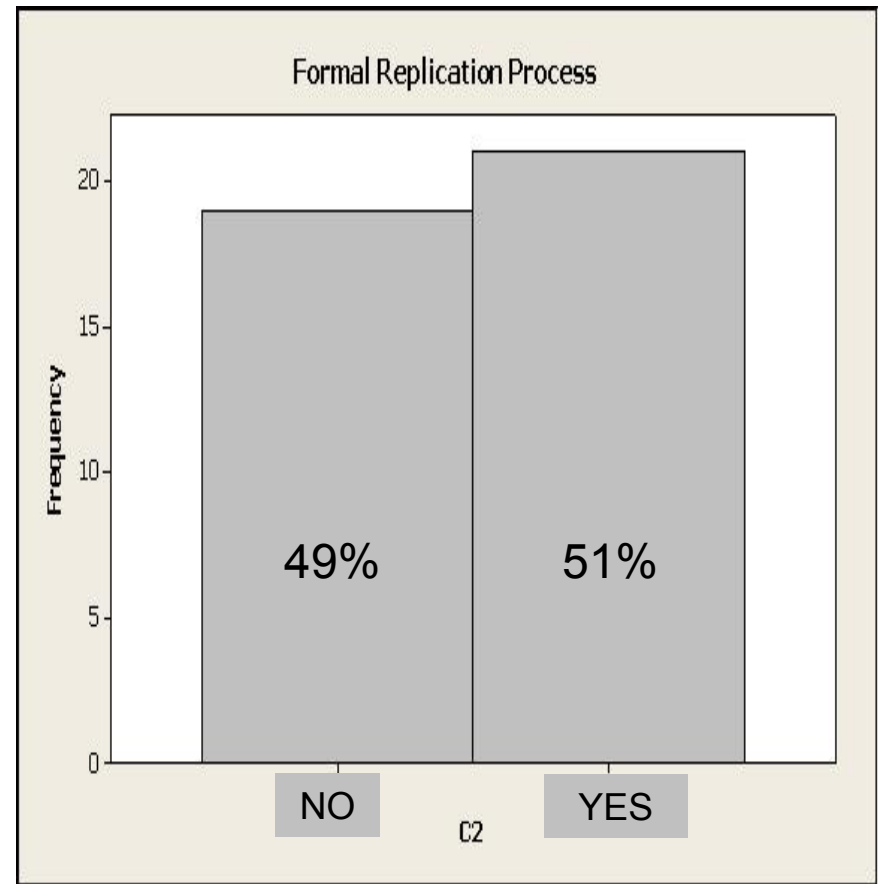
“Quick Win is now our primary method for improvement projects. We have two versions: One for complex and one for simple.”

“Given the shift to more Kaizen-type projects, we now track these projects and results.”

“We use the DMAIC framework for Quick Wins/Just-Do-Its, but we have a way to by-pass certain tools / components within DMAIC that are not needed.”

9. Did your Deployment employ a formal process for Replication of Global Solutions across the organization? If so, what is the method(s) used?

- ✓ **Many of the “YES” respondents said they used their project tracking system to identify projects for replications, but ...**
- ✓ **Few described a structure approach for replicating project solutions.**
- ✓ **Many respondents said this was an area in need of improvement.**



“After we had four or five years of deployment experience, there was a global push by senior leadership to replicate process improvement across the enterprise – this has become a core part of our global CI initiative.”

“We’ve not been able to overcome the ‘not invented here’ syndrome when it come to leveraging process solutions.”

“We can and must do better on this!”

10. What is the one improvement in your organization's deployment that would give the biggest boost to Lean Six Sigma Total ROI?



Project Selection
& Strategic
Alignment



Broader
Leadership and
Champion
Engagement

What Deployment Leaders said ...



LEADERS

“To get broader leadership engagement you need more experienced Deployment Leaders who can help line managers see the possibilities from participating in Lean Six Sigma.”

“More rigor around project selection in alignment with an overall strategy, meaning start with a true strategy deployment process and drive project selection through the deployment of that strategy.”

“Double the results of our top Belts!”

A Story Behind the Findings?



LEADERS

- Deployment leaders believe culture change is and remains their biggest challenge.
 - But putting points on the scoreboard with the right selection of projects is the first priority.
 - Yet Belt performance continues to be highly unpredictable with the major culprit being variability in Belt soft skills.
 - Managers and employee engagement in LSS is growing with the addition of more methods for quick win capture.
 - Yet leveraging project solutions through replication is still a missing capability.
 - At the end of the day, what Deployment Leaders want is greater leadership support for long-term culture change.
- THE SURVEY FINDINGS BEG THE QUESTION WHAT COMES FIRST:
... LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO LEAN SIX SIGMA CULTURAL CHANGE
OR BETTER LEAN SIX SIGMA ROI?

Recommendations for Lean Six Sigma Deployment Leaders

1. Continue efforts to expand LSS reach as an Enterprise Strategy not just a cost savings method *...it's more than just good project selection and communication.*
2. Rethink and redesign the process for screening, training and advancing Belts with more emphasis on 'hard' soft skills *...the key competency for more than 'one and out' is team leadership skills.*
3. Bring more discipline and consistency to harvesting Quick Wins *...this is fertile ground for getting more engagement and faster culture change.*
4. Solution Replication needs to be more than an after-thought *...best practices spread is key to sustainability and requires the same discipline as other LSS projects.*

➤ **DEPLOYMENT LEADERS TAKING THESE ACTIONS WILL BUILD MORE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO LONG-TERM INVESTMENT IN LEAN SIX SIGMA.**

Questions