Low-cost Document Control and Project Management software can automatically catalog the information and provide the ability to search the entire database quickly and easily. There seems to be little reason not to store complete project information indefinitely.

Six Sigma Teams

Six Sigma teams working on projects are the primary means of deploying Six Sigma and accomplishing the goals of the enterprise. Six Sigma teams are sometimes lead by the Black Belt, but the team leader may also be a properly trained Green Belt or a Six Sigma champion who has a passion for the project. In these latter cases, the team must include a Black Belt to oversee the analysis of data, which is not a part of the Green Belt and Champion training.

Six Sigma teams are composed of groups of individuals who bring authority, knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal attributes to the project. There is nothing particularly special about Six Sigma teams compared with other work teams. They are people with different backgrounds and talents pursuing a common short-term goal. Like all groups of people, there are dynamics involved that must be understood if the mission of the team is to be accomplished. This section addresses the practices that Black Belts, Green Belts, sponsors, champions, facilitators, and leaders can employ to ensure that Six Sigma teams are successful. It focuses on:

- Stages in learning to work as a team
- The difference between group maintenance roles and group task roles
- Identifying and encouraging productive roles essential to team success
- Identifying and discouraging counterproductive behavior on teams
- Facilitating team meetings
- Dealing constructively with conflicts
- Evaluating, recognizing, and rewarding teams

Team Membership

The structure of modern organizations is based on the principle of division of labor. Most organizations today consist of a number of departments, each devoted to their own specialty. A fundamental problem is that the separate functional departments tend to optimize their own operations, often to the detriment of the organization as a whole.

Traditional organizations, in effect, create barriers between departments. Departmental managers are often forced to compete for shares of limited budgets; in other words, they are playing a "zero sum game" where another manager’s gain is viewed as their department’s loss. Behavioral research has shown that people engaged in zero sum games think in terms of win-lose. This leads to self-destructive and cutthroat behavior. Overcoming this tendency requires improved communication and cooperation between departments.

Interdepartmental teams are groups of people with the skills needed to deliver the value desired. Processes are designed by the team to create the value in an effective and efficient manner. Management must see to it that the needed skills exist in the organization. It is also management’s job to see that they remove barriers to cooperation, as discussed in Chap. 2.
Team Dynamics Management, Including Conflict Resolution

Conflict management is usually the responsibility of the Six Sigma project team leader. If the team also includes a facilitator, then the facilitator can assist the leader by assuring that creative conflict is not repressed, but encouraged. Explore the underlying reasons for the conflict. If “personality disputes” are involved that threaten to disrupt the team meeting, arrange one-on-one meetings between the parties and attend the meetings to help mediate.

The first step in establishing an effective group is to create a consensus decision rule for the group, namely:

No judgment may be incorporated into the group decision until it meets at least tacit approval of every member of the group.

This minimum condition for group movement can be facilitated by adopting the following behaviors:

- **Avoid arguing for your own position**—Present it as lucidly and logically as possible, but be sensitive to and consider seriously the reactions of the group in any subsequent presentations of the same point.

- **Avoid “win-lose” stalemates in the discussion of opinions**—Discard the notion that someone must win and someone must lose in the discussion; when impasses occur, look for the next most acceptable alternative for all the parties involved.

- **Avoid changing your mind only to avoid conflict and to reach agreement and harmony**—Withstand pressures to yield which have no objective or logically sound foundation. Strive for enlightened flexibility; but avoid outright capitulation.

- **Avoid conflict-reducing techniques such as the majority vote, averaging, bargaining, coin-flipping, trading out, and the like**—Treat differences of opinion as indicative of an incomplete sharing of relevant information on someone’s part, either about task issues, emotional data, or gut level intuitions.

- **View differences of opinion as both natural and helpful rather than as a hindrance in decision-making**—Generally, the more the ideas expressed, the greater the likelihood of conflict will be; but the richer the array of resources will be as well.

- **View initial agreement as suspect**—Explore the reasons underlying apparent agreements; make sure people have arrived at the same conclusions for either the same basic reasons or for complementary reasons before incorporating such opinions into the group decision.

- **Avoid subtle forms of influence and decision modification**—For example, when a dissenting member finally agrees, don’t feel that he must be rewarded by having his own way on some subsequent point.

- **Be willing to entertain the possibility that your group can achieve all the foregoing and actually excel at its task**—Avoid doomsaying and negative predictions for group potential.

Collectively, the above steps are sometimes known as the “consensus technique.” In tests it was found that 75% of the groups who were instructed in this approach significantly outperformed their best individual resources.
**Stages in Group Development**

Groups of many different types tend to evolve in similar ways. It often helps to know that the process of building an effective group is proceeding normally. Tuckman (1965) identified four stages in the development of a group: forming, storming, norming, and performing.

During the **forming** stage a group tends to emphasize procedural matters. Group interaction is very tentative and polite. The leader dominates the decision-making process and plays a very important role in moving the group forward.

The **storming** stage follows forming. Conflict between members, and between members and the leader, are characteristic of this stage. Members question authority as it relates to the group objectives, structure, or procedures. It is common for the group to resist the attempts of its leader to move them toward independence. Members are trying to define their role in the group.

It is important that the leader deal with the conflict constructively. There are several ways in which this may be done:

- Do not tighten control or try to force members to conform to the procedures or rules established during the forming stage. If disputes over procedures arise, guide the group toward new procedures based on a group consensus.
- Probe for the true reasons behind the conflict and negotiate a more acceptable solution.
- Serve as a mediator between group members.
- Directly confront counterproductive behavior.
- Continue moving the group toward independence from its leader.

During the **norming** stage the group begins taking responsibility, or ownership, of its goals, procedures, and behavior. The focus is on working together efficiently. Group norms are enforced on the group by the group itself.

The final stage is **performing**. Members have developed a sense of pride in the group, its accomplishments, and their role in the group. Members are confident in their ability to contribute to the group and feel free to ask for or give assistance.

Table 5.2 lists some common problems with teams, along with recommended remedial action (Scholtes, 1988).

**Member Roles and Responsibilities**

**Productive Group Roles**

There are two basic types of roles assumed by members of a group: task roles and group maintenance roles. Group task roles are those functions concerned with facilitating and coordinating the group’s efforts to select, define, and solve a particular problem. The group task roles shown in Table 5.3 are generally recognized.

Another type of role played in small groups is the group maintenance roles. Group maintenance roles are aimed at building group cohesiveness and group-centered behavior. They include those behaviors shown in Table 5.4.

The development of task and maintenance roles is a vital part of the team-building process. Team building is defined as the process by which a group learns to function as a unit, rather than as a collection of individuals.
Table 5.2  Common Team Problems and Remedial Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floundering</td>
<td>• Review the plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop a plan for movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The expert</td>
<td>• Talk to offending party in private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Let the data do the talking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insist on consensus decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominating participants</td>
<td>• Structure participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Balance participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Act as gatekeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reluctant participants</td>
<td>• Structure participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Balance participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Act as gatekeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using opinions instead of facts</td>
<td>• Insist on data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use scientific method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing things</td>
<td>• Provide constructive feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insist on data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use scientific method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribution (i.e., attributing motives to people</td>
<td>• Don’t guess at motives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with whom we disagree)</td>
<td>• Use scientific method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide constructive feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignoring some comments</td>
<td>• Listen actively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Train team in listening techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Speak to offending party in private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanderlust</td>
<td>• Follow a written agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Restate the topic being discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feuds</td>
<td>• Talk to offending parties in private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop or restate ground rules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Counterproductive Group Roles
In addition to developing productive group-oriented behavior, it is also important to recognize and deal with individual roles which may block the building of a cohesive and effective team. These roles are shown in Table 5.5.

The leader’s role includes that of process observer. In this capacity, the leader monitors the atmosphere during group meetings and the behavior of individuals. The purpose is to identify counterproductive behavior. Of course, once identified, the leader must tactfully and diplomatically provide feedback to the group and its members. The success of Six Sigma is, to a great extent, dependent on the performance of groups.

Management’s Role
Perhaps the most important thing management can do for a group is to give it time to become effective. This requires, among other things, that management work to
### Table 5.3  Group Task Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role I.D.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>Proposes new ideas, tasks, or goals; suggests procedures or ideas for solving a problem or for organizing the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information seeker</td>
<td>Asks for relevant facts related to the problem being discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion seeker</td>
<td>Seeks clarification of values related to problem or suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information giver</td>
<td>Provides useful information about subject under discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion giver</td>
<td>Offers his/her opinion of suggestions made. Emphasis is on values rather than facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaborator</td>
<td>Gives examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>Shows relationship among suggestions; points out issues and alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientor</td>
<td>Relates direction of group to agreed-upon goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator</td>
<td>Questions logic behind ideas, usefulness of ideas, or suggestions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energizer</td>
<td>Attempts to keep the group moving toward an action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure technician</td>
<td>Keeps group from becoming distracted by performing such tasks as distributing materials, checking seating, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Serves as the group memory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.4  Group Maintenance Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role I.D.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourager</td>
<td>Offers praise to other members; accepts the contributions of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
<td>Reduces tension by providing humor or by promoting reconciliation; gets people to explore their differences in a manner that benefits the entire group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromiser</td>
<td>This role may be assumed when a group member’s idea is challenged; admits errors, and offers to modify his/her position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatekeeper</td>
<td>Encourages participation, suggests procedures for keeping communication channels open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard setter</td>
<td>Expresses standards for group to achieve, evaluates group progress in terms of these standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer/commentator</td>
<td>Records aspects of group process; helps group evaluate its functioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follower</td>
<td>Passively accepts ideas of others; serves as audience in group discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role I.D.</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressor</td>
<td>Expresses disapproval by attacking the values, ideas, or feelings of others. Shows jealousy or envy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocker</td>
<td>Prevents progress by persisting on issues that have been resolved; resists attempts at consensus; opposes without reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition seeker</td>
<td>Calls attention to himself/herself by boasting, relating personal achievements, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confessor</td>
<td>Uses group setting as a forum to air personal ideologies that have little to do with group values or goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playboy</td>
<td>Displays lack of commitment to group’s work by cynicism, horseplay, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominator</td>
<td>Asserts authority by interrupting others, using flattery to manipulate, and claiming superior status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help seeker</td>
<td>Attempts to evoke sympathy and/or assistance from other members through “poor me” attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special interest pleader</td>
<td>Asserts the interests of a particular group. This group’s interest matches his/her self-interest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.5** Counterproductive Group Roles

Maintain consistent group membership. Group members must not be moved out of the group without very good reason. Nor should there be a constant stream of new people temporarily assigned to the group. If a group is to progress through the four stages described earlier in this chapter, to the crucial performing stage, it will require a great deal of discipline from both the group and management.

Another area where management must help is creating an atmosphere within the company where groups can be effective.

**Facilitation Techniques**

**When to Use an Outside Facilitator**

It is not always necessary to have an outside party facilitate a group or team. While facilitators can often be of benefit, they may also add cost and the use of facilitators should, therefore, be carefully considered. The following guidelines can be used to determine if outside facilitation is needed (Schuman, 1996):

- Distrust or bias—In situations where distrust or bias is apparent or suspected, groups should make use of an unbiased outsider to facilitate (and perhaps convene) the group.
- Intimidation—The presence of an outside facilitator can encourage the participation of individuals who might otherwise feel intimidated.
- Rivalry—Rivalries between individuals and organizations can be mitigated by the presence of an outside facilitator.
- Problem definition—If the problem is poorly defined, or is defined differently by multiple parties, an unbiased listener and analyst can help construct an integrated, shared understanding of the problem.
- Human limits—Bringing in a facilitator to lead the group process lets members focus on the problem at hand, which can lead to better results.
- Complexity or novelty—In a complex or novel situation, a process expert can help the group do a better job of working together intellectually to solve the problem.
- Timelines—If a timely decision is required, as in a crisis situation, the use of a facilitator can speed the group’s work.
- Cost—A facilitator can help the group reduce the cost of meeting—a significant barrier to collaboration.

**Selecting a Facilitator**
Facilitators should possess four basic capabilities (Schuman, 1996):

1. He or she should be able to anticipate the complete problem-solving and decision-making processes.
2. He or she should use procedures that support both the group’s social and cognitive process.
3. He or she should remain neutral regarding content issues and values.
4. He or she should respect the group’s need to understand and learn from the problem-solving process.

Facilitation works best when the facilitator:

- Takes a strategic and comprehensive view of the problem-solving and decision-making processes and selects, from a broad array, the specific methods that match the group’s needs and the tasks at hand.
- Supports the group’s social and cognitive processes, freeing the group members to focus their attention on substantive issues.
- Is trusted by all group members as a neutral party who has no biases or vested interest in the outcome.
- Helps the group understand the techniques being used and helps the group improve its own problem-solving processes.

**Principles of Team Leadership and Facilitation**
Human beings are social by nature. People tend to seek out the company of other people. This is a great strength of our species, one that enabled us to rise above and dominate beasts much larger and stronger than ourselves. It is this ability that allowed men to control herds of livestock to hunt swift antelope, and to protect themselves against predators. However, as natural as it is to belong to a group, there are certain behaviors that can make the group function more (or less) effectively than their members acting as individuals.
We will define a group as a collection of individuals who share one or more common characteristics. The characteristic shared may be simple geography, that is, the individuals are gathered together in the same place at the same time. Perhaps the group shares a common ancestry, like a family. Modern society consists of many different types of groups. The first group we join is, of course, our family. We also belong to groups of friends, sporting teams, churches, PTAs, and so on. The groups differ in many ways. They have different purposes, different time frames, and involve varying numbers of people. However, all effective groups share certain common features. In their work, *Joining Together*, Johnson and Johnson (1999) list the following characteristics of an effective group:

- Group goals must be clearly understood, be relevant to the needs of group members, and evoke from every member a high level of commitment to their accomplishment.
- Group members must communicate their ideas and feelings accurately and clearly. Effective, two-way communication is the basis of all group functioning and interaction among group members.
- Participation and leadership must be distributed among members. All should participate, and all should be listened to. As leadership needs arise, members should all feel responsibility for meeting them. The equalization of participation and leadership makes certain that all members will be involved in the group’s work, committed to implementing the group’s decisions, and satisfied with their membership. It also ensures that the resources of every member will be fully utilized, and increases the cohesiveness of the group.
- Appropriate decision-making procedures must be used flexibly if they are to be matched with the needs of the situation. There must be a balance between the availability of time and resources (such as member’s skills) and the method of decision-making used for making the decision. The most effective way of making a decision is usually by consensus (see below). Consensus promotes distributed participation, the equalization of power, productive controversy, cohesion, involvement, and commitment.
- Power and influence need to be approximately equal throughout the group. They should be based on expertise, ability, and access to information, not on authority. Coalitions that help fulfill personal goals should be formed among group members on the basis of mutual influence and interdependence.
- Conflicts arising from opposing ideas and opinions (controversy) are to be encouraged. Controversies promote involvement in the group’s work, quality, creativity in decision-making, and commitment to implementing the group’s decisions. Minority opinions should be accepted and used. Conflicts prompted by incompatible needs or goals, by the scarcity of a resource (money, power), and by competitiveness must be negotiated in a manner that is mutually satisfying and does not weaken the cooperative interdependence of group members.
- Group cohesion needs to be high. Cohesion is based on members liking each other, each member’s desire to continue as part of the group, the satisfaction of members with their group membership, and the level of acceptance, support, and trust among the members. Group norms supporting psychological safety,
individuality, creativeness, conflicts of ideas, growth, and change need to be encouraged.

- Problem-solving adequacy should be high. Problems must be resolved with minimal energy and in a way that eliminates them permanently. Procedures should exist for sensing the existence of problems, inventing and implementing solutions, and evaluating the effectiveness of the solutions. When problems are dealt with adequately, the problem-solving ability of the group is increased, innovation is encouraged, and group effectiveness is improved.

- The interpersonal effectiveness of members needs to be high. Interpersonal effectiveness is a measure of how well the consequences of your behavior match intentions.

These attributes of effective groups apply regardless of the activity in which the group is engaged. It really doesn’t matter if the group is involved in a study of air defense, or planning a prom dance. The common element is that there is a group of human beings engaged in pursuit of group goals.

**Facilitating the Group Task Process**

Team activities can be divided into two subjects: task-related and maintenance-related. Task activities involve the reason the team was formed, its charter, and its explicit goals.

The facilitator should be selected before the team is formed and he or she should assist in identifying potential team members and leaders, and in developing the team’s charter.

The facilitator also plays an important role in helping the team develop specific goals based on their charter. Goal-setting is an art and it is not unusual to find that team goals bear little relationship to what management actually had in mind when the team was formed. Common problems are goals that are too ambitious, goals that are too limited and goals that assume a cause and effect relationship without proof. An example of the latter would be a team chartered to reduce scrap assuming that Part X had the highest scrap loss (perhaps based on a week’s worth of data) and setting as its goal the reduction of scrap for that part. The facilitator can provide a channel of communication between the team and management.

Facilitators can assist the team leader in creating a realistic schedule for the team to accomplish its goals. The issue of scheduling projects is covered in Chap. 6.

Facilitators should ensure that adequate records are kept on the team’s projects. Records should provide information on the current status of the project. Records should be designed to make it easy to prepare periodic status reports for management. The facilitator should arrange for clerical support with such tasks as designing forms, scheduling meetings, obtaining meeting rooms, securing audio visual equipment and office supplies.

Other activities where the facilitator’s assistance is needed include:

- **Meeting management**—Schedule the meeting well ahead of time. Be sure that key people are invited and that they plan to attend. Prepare an agenda and stick to it! Start on time. State the purpose of the meeting clearly at the outset. Take minutes. Summarize from time-to-time. Actively solicit input from those less talkative. Curtail the overly talkative members. Manage conflicts. Make assignments and responsibilities explicit and specific. End on time.
- Communication—The idea that “the quality department” can “ensure” or “control” quality is now recognized as an impossibility. To achieve quality the facilitator must enlist the support and cooperation of a large number of people outside of the team. The facilitator can relay written and verbal communication between the team and others in the organization. Verbal communication is valuable even in the era of instantaneous electronic communication. A five minute phone call can provide an opportunity to ask questions and receive answers that would take a week exchanging email and faxes. Also, the team meeting is just one communication forum, the facilitator can assist team members in communicating with one another between meetings by arranging one-on-one meetings, acting as a go-between, etc.

Facilitating the Group Maintenance Process
Study the group process. The facilitator is in a unique position to stand back and observe the group at work. Are some members dominating the group? Do facial expressions and body language suggest unspoken disagreement with the team’s direction? Are quiet members being excluded from the discussion?
When these problems are observed, the facilitator should provide feedback and guidance to the team. Ask the quiet members for their ideas and input. Ask if anyone has a problem with the team’s direction. Play devil’s advocate to draw out those with unspoken concerns.
• Absenteeism
• Service
• Turnover
• Dismissals
• Counseling usage

Many intangibles can also be measured. Some examples of intangibles affected by teams are:

• Employee attitudes
• Customer attitudes
• Customer compliments
• Customer complaints

The performance of the team process should also be measured. Project failure rates should be carefully monitored. An r chart can be used to evaluate the causes of variation in the proportion of team projects that succeed. Failure analysis should be rigorously conducted.

Aubrey and Felkins (1988) list the effectiveness measures shown below:

• Leaders trained
• Number of potential volunteers
• Number of actual volunteers
• Percent volunteering
• Projects started
• Projects dropped
• Projects completed/approved
• Projects completed/rejected
• Improved productivity
• Improved work environment
• Number of teams
• Inactive teams
• Improved work quality
• Improved service
• Net annual savings

**Team Recognition and Reward**

Recognition is a form of employee motivation in which the company identifies and thanks employees who have made positive contributions to the company’s success. In an ideal company, motivation flows from the employees’ pride of workmanship. When employees are enabled by management to do their jobs and produce a product or service of excellent quality, they will be motivated.
The reason recognition systems are important is not that they improve work by providing incentives for achievement. Rather, they make a statement about what is important to the company. Analyzing a company’s employee recognition system provides a powerful insight into the company’s values in action. These are the values that are actually driving employee behavior. They are not necessarily the same as management’s stated values. For example, a company that claims to value customer satisfaction but recognizes only sales achievements probably does not have customer satisfaction as one of its values in action.

Public recognition is often better for two reasons:

1. Some (but not all) people enjoy being recognized in front of their colleagues.
2. Public recognition communicates a message to all employees about the priorities and function of the organization.

The form of recognition can range from a pat on the back to a small gift to a substantial amount of cash. When substantial cash awards become an established pattern, however, it signals two potential problems:

1. It suggests that several top priorities are competing for the employee’s attention, so that a large cash award is required to control the employee’s choice.
2. Regular, large cash awards tend to be viewed by the recipients as part of the compensation structure, rather than as a mechanism for recognizing support of key corporate values.

Carder and Clark (1992) list the following guidelines and observations regarding recognition:

*Recognition is not a method by which management can manipulate employees.* If workers are not performing certain kinds of tasks, establishing a recognition program to raise the priority of those tasks might be inappropriate. Recognition should not be used to get workers to do something they are not currently doing because of conflicting messages from management. A more effective approach is for management to first examine the current system of priorities. Only by working on the system can management help resolve the conflict.

*Recognition is not compensation.* In this case, the award must represent a significant portion of the employee’s regular compensation to have significant impact. Recognition and compensation differ in a variety of ways:

- Compensation levels should be based on long-term considerations such as the employee’s tenure of service, education, skills, and level of responsibility. Recognition is based on the specific accomplishments of individuals or groups.
- Recognition is flexible. It is virtually impossible to reduce pay levels once they are set, and it is difficult and expensive to change compensation plans.
- Recognition is more immediate. It can be given in timely fashion and therefore relate to specific accomplishments.
- Recognition is personal. It represents a direct and personal contact between employee and manager. Recognition should not be carried out in such a manner that implies that people of more importance (managers) are giving something to people of less importance (workers).
Positive reinforcement is not always a good model for recognition. Just because the manager is using a certain behavioral criterion for providing recognition, it doesn’t mean that the recipient will perceive the same relationship between behavior and recognition.

Employees should not believe that recognition is based primarily on luck. An early sign of this is cynicism. Employees will tell you that management says one thing but does another.

Recognition meets a basic human need. Recognition, especially public recognition, meets the needs for belonging and self-esteem. In this way, recognition can play an important function in the workplace. According to Abraham Maslow’s theory, until these needs for belonging and self-esteem are satisfied, self-actualizing needs such as pride in work, feelings of accomplishment, personal growth, and learning new skills will not come into play.

Recognition programs should not create winners and losers. Recognition programs should not recognize one group of individuals time after time while never recognizing another group. This creates a static ranking system, with all of the problems discussed earlier.

Recognition should be given for efforts, not just for goal attainment. According to Imai (1986), a manager who understands that a wide variety of behaviors are essential to the company will be interested in criteria of discipline, time management, skill development, participation, morale, and communication, as well as direct revenue production. To be able to effectively use recognition to achieve business goals, managers must develop the ability to measure and recognize such process accomplishments.

Employee involvement is essential in planning and executing a recognition program. It is essential to engage in extensive planning before instituting a recognition program or before changing a bad one. The perceptions and expectations of employees must be surveyed.

Lessons-Learned Capture and Replication

It is often possible to apply the lessons learned from a project to other processes, either internally or externally. Most companies have more than one person or organizational unit performing similar or identical tasks. Many also have suppliers and outsourcers who do work similar to that being done internally. By replicating the changes done during a project the benefits of Six Sigma can be multiplied manyfold, often at very minimal cost. Think of it as a form of benchmarking. Instead of looking for the best-in-class process for you to learn from, the Six Sigma team created a best-in-class process and you want to teach the new approach to others.

Unlike benchmarking, where the seeker of knowledge is predisposed to change what they are doing, the process owners who might benefit from the knowledge gained during a Six Sigma project may not even be aware that they can benefit from a change. This needs to be accounted for when planning the program for sharing lessons learned. The process is a combination of motivation, education and selling the target audience on the new approach. Chances are that those who worked the project are not the best ones to sell others on the new approach. They can serve as technical advisers to those who will carry the message to other areas. The Six Sigma function (Process Excellence) usually takes the lead in developing a system for replication and sharing of lessons learned.

In addition to the lessons learned about business processes, a great deal will be learned about how to conduct successful projects. In a few years even a moderately