

Case Studies

Creating Employee Excitement Lockheed Martin

Deploying Lean and Six Sigma processes across the company to raise awareness, communicate success and drive change

By providing a strategic communications framework and a variety of effective and sometimes unconventional tactics, L.M. Dulye & Co. helped Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense contractor, introduce and integrate Lean and Six Sigma methodologies to 130,000 employees working on more than 3,000 programs at over 50 sites.

Ultimately, Lockheed Martin took the principles of Lean and Six Sigma one step further, driving the methodology beyond the traditional manufacturing applications to improve processes in not only engineering, but also program management and administrative and support functions, including accounting, business development, payroll, human resources and procurement.

Introduced in 1998, Lockheed Martin's process improvement program, which included Lean and Six Sigma, evolved from a "best practices" approach to help integrate 17 heritage companies to a corporate way of life. For a small core group of Lean/Six Sigma practitioners in the beginning, words like "Kaizen," "Takt time," "Muda," and "Green Belt" were a part of everyday language - and practice. But for most employees at Lockheed Martin, these terms were completely foreign. Many employees were also skeptical of the change process, dismissing Lean and Six Sigma as the newest corporate "fad."

For Lockheed Martin employees, the language of process improvement needed explanation and context to help change attitudes, perceptions and behaviors.

Communicating effectively with a diverse audience presented unique challenges not often found in typical corporate communications settings. But L.M. Dulye & Co. overcame those challenges by creating a communications strategy for Lockheed Martin that was segmented by audience, helping those with less knowledge understand the importance and impact of successes, while also supporting change agents with meaningful success stories from around the Corporation to help "sell" their improvement strategies to corporate leaders.

We created and customized multiple communications resources that capitalized on the prominence of two-way, face-to-face and electronic media in the workplace. We also produced information tools to bolster managers' knowledge - both in introducing the initiative and providing frequent progress updates. One of these tools was a monthly newsletter for all employees about Lean and Six Sigma successes with stories that emphasized not only results, but also process steps and project challenges.

We also found that Lockheed Martin leaders and change agents who had earned their "Black Belts" in Six Sigma principles needed additional support to bolster knowledge and expertise on change management. In response, we developed a variety of electronic, virtual and in-person forums so that they could share ideas, successes, challenges and solutions with each other.

Now in its fifth year of Lean and Six Sigma deployment, Lockheed Martin has accrued more than \$4 billion in certified savings, introduced the methodologies to more than 5,000 leaders via weeklong classes, and produced more than 6,000 "experts" - those with Green Belts and Black Belts. Today, these experts have held thousands of Lean and Six Sigma events and introduced hundreds of programs, making "LM21" an engrained business process across the corporation.

L.M. Dulye & Co. helped Lockheed Martin achieve these successes by breaking down complex theories into simple messages, introducing presentations and videos, creating newsletters and other internal communication resources, and guiding corporate efforts with an effective and in-depth strategic plan.

Our expertise in targeted, strategic communications - such as the plan we created to support Lean and Six Sigma deployment at Lockheed Martin -can help your company overcome resistance to change and effectively introduce and drive a robust process improvement environment.