Implementing Improvement Strategies: Dynamic Work Design

Program Details
This program provides practical tools and methods for sustainable improvement efforts of any scale, in any industry, and in any function. It is built on a foundation of principles and methods called Dynamic Work Design and can be adapted to any type of work in any type of organization.

Proceeding from principles, not practices, is a key to sustainable change, allowing integration with current culture, processes, and practices, while delivering fast results with little overhead of training or major initiatives. The method has proven to work in businesses as diverse as oil/gas, DNA sequencing and engineering/innovation and works at the scale of discrete problems or organizational-wide strategic efforts. Improvement begins to happen in rapid and natural ways; results begin showing up almost immediately.

The course is inspired by the collaboration between instructors Don Kieffer and Nelson Repenning who integrated industry practice and academic investigation over a 20-year period to develop Dynamic Work Design. Students will learn to identify the value-added elements of their own work and of their organization. More importantly, students will learn to identify opportunities for improving and how to get started based on a framework of principles and methods.

Takeaways
The main purpose of this program is two-fold: one is to help participants understand how continuous improvement strategies, sustained over a long period of time, affect core business metrics and contribute to the success of the organization from bottom-up and top-down perspectives; and the other is how to change the way managers see work and their own roles as leaders in the culture of improvement. This program will enable participants to:

• Understand the principles and approaches that drive improvement; and apply them in all areas in the context of a particular company, thus creating a tangible culture of continuous improvement
• Implement improvement naturally in their everyday work, not from a prescribed list, but from a deep personal understanding of the principles
• Recognize successful improvement initiatives already in place and build on them
• Identify the true value-added aspects of work performed by individual workers and the entire organization
• Ensure that business targets and improvement activities are tightly linked at every level
• Develop inquiry and evidence-based problem solving skills for individuals and for organizations
• Transform managers from controllers to enablers by leveraging the relationship between designing the work well and the engagement of employees that follows
• Generate “pull” from within the organization for new methods of work
• Make results (and problems) visible so that they can be addressed constructively
• Not just remove defects, but learn how to design work correctly from the beginning

In today’s challenging business climate, it’s essential that companies develop management and operational practices that are based on sound principles. Don Kieffer’s hands-on style and business insights are invaluable to any executive team looking to lead their organizations in this competitive business environment.”

—Bill Dannehl, Former Executive VP, Harley-Davidson
Read this review and others online.
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Sample Program Schedule
(subject to change)

Day 1

8:00–8:30 AM  Registration and Continental Breakfast
8:30–9:00 AM  Introduction and Program Objectives
9:00–11:00 AM Key Concepts
11:00 AM–12:00 PM  Practical Applications
12:00–1:00 PM Networking Lunch
1:00–6:00 PM Principles and Science of Dynamic Work Design
6:00–7:00 PM Reception

Day 2

8:00–8:30 AM Continental Breakfast
8:30–9:30 AM Recap and Discussion
9:30–10:00 AM Introduction to Problem Formulation
10:00–10:15 AM Break
10:15–11:45 AM Problem Formulation Exercise
11:45 AM–12:45 PM Networking Lunch
12:45–2:15 PM Introduction to Visual Management
2:15–3:30 PM Visual Management Exercise
3:30–4:00 PM Getting Started: How You Show Up
4:00–4:10 PM Adjournment

Participants
The program is intended for executives, senior managers, and leaders from every sector. Managers at any level of responsibility will benefit from this program, but it’s the senior leadership that should be able to embrace and champion the principles of improvement for the benefit of the entire organization. Here are some indicators that this program will be of value:

- An organization’s need for improvement is greater than its ability to deliver it
- Company executives are drowning in data, emails, and meetings, and suffering under the weight of a large number of activities and initiatives, many of which are not focused on the important issues
- Management behavior doesn’t change much or is actively resistant to improvement
- Improvement methods are not integrated into all of the company’s work beyond that of the improvement department
- There is lack of clear understanding how improvement methodologies and value-add apply to executives, knowledge workers, and technical and administrative staff in non-factory settings

Program Faculty
Please note that faculty are subject to change and not all faculty teach in each session of the program.

- Sheila Dodge, Senior Director, Genomics Platform Operations and Development, Broad Institute
- Don Kieffer, Senior Lecturer, Operations Management
- Nelson Repenning, School of Management Distinguished Professor of System Dynamics and Organization Studies. Faculty Director, MIT Executive MBA Program

“This course blends the practical insights of the instructor with ‘theory’ (still very grounded) along with an engaging game and a case study. The combination of learning modes reinforces the concepts in a highly effective manner.”

—Brady J.
Past Participant
Read this review and others online.

Contact Information
MIT Sloan Executive Education
P: +1-617-253-7166 • E: sloanexeced@mit.edu

http://executive.mit.edu/iis