

What is Lean?

As part of State government, we want to provide the highest quality of life to as many of Maine's citizens as possible. And we all want to do this

- As quickly as possible.
- As simply as possible.
- With the highest quality possible.
- Using the fewest resources possible.
- Using facts whenever possible to solve problems.
- With a disciplined, best practice approach.
- In a way that is sustainable beyond our tenure in government.

The Lean model provides the philosophy and approach for us to do this. The Lean philosophy is fundamentally about creating value for the customer/client while using the fewest resources possible. It's about getting the right service in the right amount to the right person at the right time, while minimizing waste and being flexible and open to change and improvement. It is, at its heart, essentially a disciplined thought process about the work we do and describes a dynamic process governed by a systemic set of principles, methods, and practices that embrace all aspects of our work.

Lean is, therefore, *a way of thinking* to adapt to change, eliminate waste, and continuously improve. It does not expect us to arrive at perfection. Instead, it stresses an evolutionary process of change and adaptation. It provides a number of tools and techniques to help us maximize the effort of our workforce and to operate as a lean government.

There are several key principles that are at the core of Lean philosophy:

- 1) Know your customer/client – who they are and what they want and when.
- 2) The customer defines value.
- 3) Keep the process simple (and eliminate waste).
- 4) Do "it" right the first time.
- 5) Involve and empower employees.
- 6) Continually improve in pursuit of perfection.

These principles probably appear to be common sense and straightforward and yet are often very difficult to make a reality. The principles assume that an individual, team, or an organization are consistently operating with a **PROCESS MINDSET**. Having a process mindset means that the notion of "process" is so imprinted into our worldview that it is an automatic filter through which we view reality. So much so, that when asked, "What do you do for work?" we see a process, not simply a task or an event. Not only do we see a process but many processes, weaving together -- as well as many levels of process.

With a process mindset, it also becomes easier to identify those things that do not add value from the customer's perspective, such as **WASTE**. Waste, or non value-added tasks/steps, is not something a customer would be willing to pay for. In the Toyota system, waste is defined as "anything other than the minimum amount of equipment, materials, parts, space, and worker's time which are absolutely necessary to add value to the product [services]." When we do things right the first time, there is less waste and more value to the customer.

When our processes are simple and **FLOW** in a continuous, connected, unobstructed way, there is less waste and more value to the customer. Flow is defined as the progressive achievement of tasks along a value stream so that a product or service proceeds from the beginning and into the hands of the customer without any stoppages/waits, waste, or backlogs. Through the value stream mapping process, we can visualize the process flow, measure it, and then plan and implement ways to improve it.

The term **VALUE STREAM** is simply all the specific activities required to design, order, and provide a service or product to a customer. The bookends identified in a team's charter define the beginning and end of the particular value stream to be mapped.

Key Lean Characteristics:

- Pull service delivery: Services are “pulled” by the consumer, not pushed from the service delivery end.
- First-time quality: Striving for excellence/perfection, for zero defects/redoing work. Identifying & solving problems at their source; achieving higher quality and performance at the same time; teamwork & worker empowerment.
- Waste minimization: Minimizing/eliminating activities that do not add value; maximizing use of resources (capital, people, and space), efficient use of just-in-time inventory.
- Continuous improvement: Continually improving quality, increasing productivity/performance, reducing costs (resources), and sharing information.
- Flexibility: Being open to change; providing different mixes and/or greater diversity of services quickly, without sacrificing efficiency.
- Long-Term Relationships: Building and maintaining effective long-term relationships with providers/contractors through collaborative risk-sharing, cost-sharing, and information-sharing arrangements.

THE IMPORTANCE OF *Bend the Curve*

Expectations for services provided by the department, both directly and through community agencies, are changing significantly at the same time as the human and financial resources available for these services. Addressing the challenge of improving services to the Maine individuals, families, organizations, and communities DHHS serves is of imperative importance.

Using the *Bend the Curve (BTC)* approach to services delivery and how the department does its work will result in effective and efficient, consistent, and high-quality services, that are valued by our customers and are based on standardized, evidence-based best practices with uniform oversight and accountability.

HOW DOES *Bend the Curve* APPLY TO YOU?

Do you --

- Chase information?
- Jump through multiple process and decision hoops?
- Wait a long time for approvals?
- Get constantly interrupted?
- Have to have a batch of work before it's acted on or moved forward?
- Feel your knowledge and work is not included in planning and decision-making?
- Find that work gets lost between organizational silos?
- Encounter multiple understandings about how work gets done?

Then *Bend the Curve* can help you !

The *BTC* Team can support you and your colleagues in making the changes necessary to meet the challenges of changing resources and expectations.

➤ What is the purpose of the *Bend the Curve* Team?

The primary purpose of the DHHS *Bend the Curve* Team is to provide support, consultation, assistance, and leadership in process and other improvement approaches and activities for departmental staff and work teams as they seek to continually improve their work culture, procedures, processes, and environments – all in order to meet the mission of the department and the expectations of Maine citizens.



Improving
Services
to DHHS
Clients

➤ **Who are *Bend the Curve* Team members?**

They are fellow State employees who have been trained as Continuous Improvement Practitioners. They are knowledgeable about the continuous improvement approach, tools, and implementation.

➤ **How can the *BTC* Team help you?**

- Provide awareness to you and your colleagues about *Bend the Curve* and Lean continuous improvement.
- Consult in identifying and defining work processes needing improvement.
- Identify and evaluate measurable cost and time savings, as well as quality.
- Assist with the development and monitoring of change/action plans.



**Building
Effective Teams
& Service
Processes**

➤ **What will the *BTC* approach and methodology help you to do?**

- Problem-solve to improve the delivery of services.
- Involve the staff who know the work in decision-making.
- Improve work flow design and implementation.
- Meet client/customer service expectations.
- Focus on activities/work that are value-added.
- Use measurements for improving processes and planning.
- Implement improvements more efficiently and effectively.



**Using the Power of
the Work Group for
Process
Improvement**

VALUE STREAM MAPPING -- A MAJOR TOOL

Value Stream Mapping (VSM) is a visual mapping tool that outlines all the steps in a process and helps to identify ineffective procedures and waste, as well as to develop implementation action plans for making continuous improvements. It develops a better way to --

- Identify a Current Process State.
- Design the improved Future Process State.
- Prepare a Change/Action Plan to Move Toward the Future State.
- Implement & Monitor the Action Plan.



This is the Contracting VSM Team -- very successful, fun to work with, and we all learned a lot about the contracting process. Just ask them!

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

DHHS Vision

Maine people live safe, healthy, and productive lives

Mission Statement

Provide integrated health and human services to the people of Maine to assist individuals in meeting their needs, while respecting the rights and preferences of the individual and family, within available resources.

Guiding Principles

- *Treat consumers with dignity and respect;*
- *Deliver services that are individualized, family-centered, easily accessible, preventive, independence-oriented, interdisciplinary, collaborative, evidence-based, and consistent with best and promising practices;*
- *Value and support departmental staff as a critical connection to the consumer;*
- *Engage staff, stakeholders, providers and customers in a collaborative partnership that continuously seeks excellence in service design and delivery;*
- *Balance centralized accountability with regional flexibility; and*
- *Align systems, actions, and values toward a common vision.*

Department Goals

- 1. Protect and enhance the health and well-being of Maine people*
- 2. Promote independence and self sufficiency*
- 3. Protect and care for those who are unable to care for themselves*
- 4. Provide effective stewardship for the resources entrusted to the department*

Department Outcomes & Measures

- *High Performing Staff*
- *Excellent Provider Partnerships*
- *Integrated Services*
- *Superior Customer Service*
- *Efficient and Effective Administration*

➤ *Program Objectives* ➤ *Program Performance Indicators* ➤ *Staff Performance Expectations*



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STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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