



March 2014

New Fellowship Opportunity Invites Young Leaders to Explore State Government and Continuous Improvement

The State of Minnesota's enterprise continuous improvement (CI) team is again looking to increase its ranks, thanks to a new fellowship program within the Minnesota Department of Administration.

The Department of Admin is currently putting out the call to young professionals who are interested in exploring careers in state government. Amongst the current fellowship opportunities, one of them has a strong CI component.

During their fellowship term, the fellow will be introduced to the State's various CI and performance management efforts, and invited to play an important role in advancing them. They will spend six months working in the Minnesota Department of Administration, as a member of the state's enterprise CI team. They will have the opportunity to assist with a variety of state agency CI projects and events, along with the tracking and measurement of improvement results. From there, the fellow will move over to Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) for the second half of the term. At MMB, they will help support performance management and measurement efforts across the State, monitoring data on key indicators and evaluating program results. Across both experiences, the fellow will be tasked with bringing a focus on data and measurement into the State's various operations.

The fellowship is a one-year, post-graduate experience, targeted at individuals who have recently earned a graduate degree in government, public policy, business administration, political science or another related field. Students who are on the verge of completing their graduate coursework in one of these areas are also eligible to apply.

Are you interested in this opportunity? Do you have friends, family, colleagues or other connections who would be a good fit? Check out [the full position posting](#) to learn more about the fellowship and the application process. You can apply on the [State Careers website](#) – the **application period is open until Friday, April 4, 2014.**

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Food for Thought...

Check out the [Washington Post's story](#) on a very thorny federal government process. Could CI help?

At the Minnesota Historical Society, Improvement Efforts Continue to Build

Unsurprisingly, there are processes for managing the receipt of these various types of support, including membership. Earlier this March, staff at MNHS completed a kaizen event to assess and improve some of those very processes.

More specifically, this MNHS kaizen team took a closer look at the Gift Acknowledgement process, a process the organization engages in to connect with supporters, confirming their gifts, issuing membership cards, and saying “thanks for your support.”

All told, MNHS acknowledges roughly 25,000 gifts each year. Going into the event, MNHS was not measuring or evaluating the cycle time for these gift acknowledgements and was handling all gifts in a similar fashion regardless of the donation amount. In scoping out the event, the team differentiated between membership requests and donations.



The Minnesota Historical Society Gift Acknowledgement Kaizen Team

The project sponsor challenged the team to define a future state process that could deliver 95 percent of acknowledgements within 48 hours (2 days). Initially, the team questioned whether this goal was achievable. However, by the conclusion of the event, the team was proud to present recommended changes that will indeed achieve the goal.

The team outlined customer and stakeholder requirements, mapped out the current processes, shaped a desired future process, and developed a list of recommendations. By standardizing and cleaning up procedures and roles, reducing physical handoffs, and expanding the use of digital signatures, the team expects to reach its goals in the months ahead. In addition, the team established some performance measures to gauge their success; they committed to start tracking the gift acknowledgement process –

Upcoming Events

April 8, Lean 101, [Register](#) *1 seat remaining*

April 9-10, Kaizen Facilitator Training, [Register](#) *1 seat remaining*

April 17, MN CI User Group Session, [RSVP](#)

May 6, Lean 101, [Register](#)

May 7, Leading Improvement Projects, [Register](#) *NEW*

June 12, Lean 101, [Register](#)

June 12, Effective Problem Solving, [Register](#) *NEW*

June 16-17, Kaizen Facilitator Training, [Register](#)

Aug. 5, Lean 101

Aug. 6-7, Kaizen Facilitator Training

Sept. 8, Lean 101

Sept. 8, Problem Solving with CI *NEW*

Sept. 11, Leading Improvement Projects *NEW*

Oct. 6, Lean 101

Oct. 7-8, Kaizen Facilitator Training

Nov. 3, Lean 101

Nov. 3, Problem Solving with CI *NEW*

Nov. 4, Leading Improvement Projects *NEW*

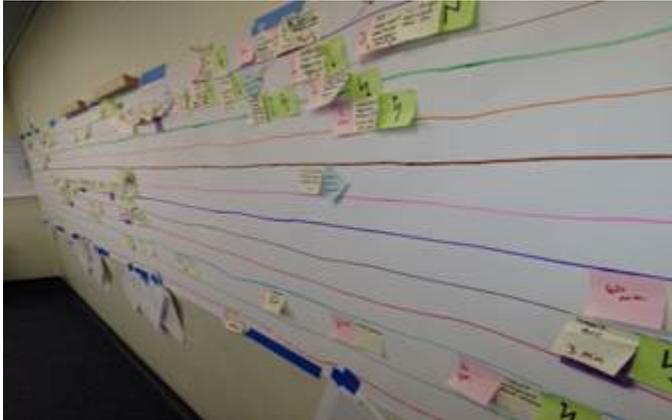
Dec. 2, Lean 101

Dec. 3-4, Kaizen Facilitator Training

View all Lean events at www.lean.state.mn.us/calendar

Registration for upcoming trainings is open at mnlean.eventbrite.com.

from the moment a gift is entered until the moment it is successfully acknowledged – and to collect feedback during the transition period.



The “current” process swim lane map for the Gift Acknowledgement process.

It seems the kaizen method is becoming a more common sight around the halls and offices of the Minnesota History Center in recent days – MNHS’s kaizen efforts were also highlighted in the [November 2013 issue of this newsletter](#). Whether it’s hiring, gift acknowledgement or some other process yet to come, MNHS is leveraging continuous improvement to maintain its position as a vibrant, leading educational organization in Minnesota.
