

Practical Lean Six Sigma for Healthcare - Using the A3 and Lean Thinking to Improve Operational Performance in Hospitals, Clinics, and Physician Group Practices

By Todd Sperl, Rob Ptacek, Jayant Trewn, PhD

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This book bridges the gap between a highly quantitative analysis of a process that requires extensive training (i.e., Six Sigma certification) and a more simplified approach that can be used and understood by the masses (i.e., Lean thinking). We introduce the familiar healthcare protocol for patient care and safety, the Assess, Diagnosis, Treat, and Prevent (ADTP) model to be considered as an improvement methodology. This will assist those in your facility to better understand how Lean and Six Sigma can be successfully deployed. (NOTE: Please see The Practical Lean Six Sigma Pocket Guide for Healthcare (smaller, 3.5 in. x 5.5 in.) for the same tools, concepts, etc. arranged in the D-M-A-I-C model for less than 10 dollars!) The goal of this book is to make the methods and tools of Lean and Six Sigma accessible to more people and provide a common sense or practical approach to problem solving and continuous improvement. This book is intended to be used by Sigma Belt Levels, Lean Senseis (i.e., teachers), Continuous Improvement Specialists, front-line managers, and supervisors of departments and work groups, and improvement team members in their efforts to improve the patient care experience while reducing waste and variation in all types of healthcare processes. The Lean Six Sigma tools and concepts are presented relative to the A3 road map to provide a definitive how-to guide to problem solving and continuous improvement (Kaizen) initiatives.

The examples contained in this book are from a wide range of hospitals, clinics, and physician group practices, and will assist team members to fully understand the tool s usage and purpose.

Throughout this book, the different improvement methodologies that organizations may already be using to meet the Joint Commission requirements are recognized and mentioned. We acknowledge that all have their benefits. It is important to select the one that fits the organization and will be widely used. The methodology should be easy to understand and follow, therefore better engaging the employees, as well as providing a visual management structure for reporting and sustaining continuous improvement initiatives.

The examples provided throughout this publication demonstrate how a Lean or Six Sigma tool was used in a particular setting. We have presented them in this manner to provide a general understanding on how the tools can be applied in everyday (i.e., practical) healthcare services. This includes supporting key parts of the Affordable Care Act (such as EMR deployment and meaningful use) and the IHI Triple Aim initiative.

Practical Lean Six Sigma for Healthcare is designed as a convenient, quick reference, and, most importantly, a step-by-step implementation guide. You can put your finger on any tool within a matter of seconds! Use the book as follows: Navigate the A3 Report as you progress through the project (starting at the top left of the report moving vertically to the bottom right). Complete the A3 Report as you learn and apply the tools on the project by: 1. Go to the tab in the book that corresponds to the A3 Report section you are working on. 2. Read about the tools for that stage of your project. 3. Apply the appropriate tools. 4. Complete the relevant section of the A3. 5. Repeat 1 - 4 as you navigate through the A3 and complete your project. Use the Case Study Example Look-Ahead to direct you to specific pages relative to hospitals, clinics, and/or physician group practices. Use the Index for quick access to a specific topic or tool. We expect with the knowledge conveyed in this book, as well as the experiences from your improvement projects, that one day you will become a Lean Sensei.

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Editorial Review

Review
A MUST-HAVE for healthcare professionals seeking a useful, clear-cut handbook for process improvement methods and tools, complete with case studies and examples related to improving the patient experience. -- Dr. Ernest Yoder, Dean College of Medicine, Central Michigan University

This book is a necessity in today's rising costs and declining reimbursements. --Kari Gortz, Medical VP of Operation

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About the Author
Todd Sperl is an enthusiastic, creative speaker and process improvement expert who looks beyond today s problems to find tomorrow s solutions. As Owner and Managing Partner of Lean Fox Solutions, Todd s vision is to improve the patient care experience from one healthcare touch point to the next. As a Master Black Belt and Lean Sensei, Todd s exceptional track record of process improvement has been based on his philosophy of total enterprise engagement in change. Todd received his BS in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and an MS in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from St. Mary s University in San Antonio, Texas.

Rob Ptacek is a Partner in the Global Lean Institute and President and CEO of Competitive Edge Training and Consulting, a firm specializing in leader and organizational development, and Lean Enterprise transformations. Rob holds a BS in Metallurgical Engineering from Michigan Technological University and a Masters of Management from Aquinas College. Rob has held leadership positions in Quality, Sales, and Operations Management, and has over 25 years of practical experience implementing continuous improvements in a variety of industries.

Jayant Trewn is an Industrial Engineer specializing in Quality Systems design, development, implementation, and management. Jayant has accumulated over a decade of experience working in healthcare organizations such as Spectrum Health Medical Group, Beaumont Hospitals, and Lason Systems where he built healthcare delivery process improvement programs based on Lean, Six Sigma, and PDCA concepts. Jayant has authored the book Multivariate Statistical Methods in Quality Engineering and he has been published in international journals. He holds a Doctorate degree in Industrial Engineering from the College of Engineering, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, USA. He earned his MBA in Information Systems at Wayne State University and his Bachelor of Engineering degree from Madras University, India.

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