



LEAN CASE STUDY:

LEAN APPLIED TO POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS- ALGONQUIN COLLEGE

Algonquin College is committed to student success and improving the student experience as it prepares the workforce of tomorrow.

This focus on student success led to the identification, by the School of Business, of the Lean methodology as an innovative and practical approach to continuous improvement. Lean involves reviewing a process from end-to-end with the ultimate objective being the provision of value to the client through the continual and systematic elimination of waste, or non-value added activities, from all aspects of the organization's operations.

Lean Advisors Inc.

The adaptation of Lean to the College's unique situation and ensured sustainability within the organization required expert advice from professionals who had expertise in transforming non-traditional environments using Lean. Lean Advisors Inc. (LEAD®) provided this advice. The LEAD® professionals had a solid background in Lean and had worked with companies around the world using Lean in service, administrative, government and manufacturing environments. The College appreciated their method of transferring knowledge while adapting and applying the thinking of Lean to their administrative processes.

The Recruitment through Registration process was the first end-to-end process chosen for this initiative as it was a cross-departmental process which created value for their clients from the moment they showed interest in the College until they registered as students. To get started the College used the Enterprise Value Stream Mapping™ Tool. A system wide current state map was drawn and analyzed. Once analysed, the College was able to develop a future state and a detailed implementation plan. The future state implementation plan outlined all of the kaizens and initiatives required to transform the process from the current state to the desired future state.

The key elements of this exercise were to ensure everyone was 'seeing' the entire system and not just their own department and that the focus wasn't on any department or individual but on the client; the student.

Results

The results to date have been impressive. Algonquin College clients have experienced a number of positive outcomes as the result of the recent identification and implementation of many process improvements. These outcomes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Shortened delivery times;
- Reduced wait times;
- Improvements in service quality;
- Improvements in product quality;
- Increased revenues/decreased costs;

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- Process improvements;
 - 25% improvement in the processing time for student timetable delivery; and,
 - 95% reduction in the time to process the College information package to mail-out.

Creating a Culture of Continuous Improvement From the outset, the focus has been on the client and each successful improvement of these cross-departmental processes has been realized through the collective effort of many individuals working in a collaborative way. To date, both academic and administrative staffs working on this initiative have received training in Lean methods. Observers of this process note that the environment is positive and extremely productive when administrative and academic staff work together to improve the student experience. Lean – Algonquin College School of Business, e-Business Supply Chain Management Degree Program

The Level 07 (4th year) students in the e-Business Supply Chain management degree program were provided expert instruction from Lean Advisors Inc. (LEAD®). In addition to the theory provided in class, the students participated in simulations and hands-on exercises to apply and visualize LEAN these concepts. The goal of this exercise was to give students the ability to look at any business organization and understand how they can help transform companies to be more competitive, customer focused and flexible.

The Algonquin College Value Stream (Lean) Implementation Manager and Professor Mace (Business School Coordinator) worked to obtain managerial support, select appropriate projects and coordinate activities. Student teams were required to create current and future state maps and implementation plans for actual College processes. The project received enthusiastic support from College managers and, in the end, five student projects were selected. Students applied the knowledge they had learned to

Ancillary Services, the Residence, and the Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD), Financial Aid and the Students' Association areas.

This was a win-win-win. College administrators had a positive impact on the learning environment; the students gained the practical, hands-on experience and confidence necessary for the workplace application of these skills; and, the learning environment made a positive impact on the College's business processes.

Next Steps The College's Value Stream Steering Committee is currently developing an overall strategy for the College-wide implementation of the Lean approach. Student support processes have been identified for the next phase of reviews and discussions have been initiated with managers responsible for these activities. The identification and training of participants will be conducted over the next two months and the iterative implementation of improvements will begin thereafter. These student support processes currently fall under Student Services, Ancillary Services, Information Technology Services (ITS), the Students' Association and Physical Resources. Of course, at the same time, the College will continue the work on the initial Recruitment through Registration initiative. Staff members collaborating on this value stream continue to see the positive results of continuous improvement. **Conclusion** Algonquin College is committed to continuously improving the College using the Lean approach. Their focus continues to be their clients and in meeting or exceeding their ever-changing, ever-evolving expectations. Congratulations to all who participated in this successful initiative. It is the implementation of these positive and sustainable process improvements which will continue to have an impact on the future of Algonquin College and will position the College as a model for all other educational institutes which desire to be the best!