



## Lean Fox Solutions

**Health Care  
Manufacturing  
Services, Technology & Sales**

## The Behavioural Imperative to Change the Paradigm and Support Change across Organizations

### Synopsis

Creating change to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by an organization is one of the most significant challenges any leader faces. The deployment of Lean and other process improvement approaches, along with strategic management and organizational development strategies, have been identified as effective methodologies to provide teams and staff with tools to make change and implement strategies to improve performance.

Lean is fundamentally about changing organizational processes. But those processes are delivered by PEOPLE and without them changing their behavior appropriately; little lasting improvement will be found. What has become increasingly clear in order to achieve and sustain successful performance improvement, is the need to not just train leaders and others on the methodologies, tools, techniques of a Lean strategy but also to ensure behavioural change by those individuals.

A tremendous amount of the Lean literature talks about the need for “cultural change” within an organization in order for performance improvement to be successful. We know culture is a reflection of the behaviours exhibited within an organization. Therefore, the fundamental question asked in support of this project, was: “which behaviours become most dominant in order to support individual and organizational performance when deploying a Lean strategy to improve performance?”

The “Leaning Forward” project approach developed by LeanFox Solutions and deployed at a community hospital in Ontario employed a technology developed by Behavioural Sciences Systems Ltd. (BSS) that enabled identification of the key behaviours central to successful implementation of identified Lean improvement processes. And it enabled project leaders to measure the degree to which both the program participants, and the organization as a whole, demonstrated those behaviours.

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### Background

Our hospital client was a general community hospital, serving a population of approximately 100,000 people, the hospital provides a full range of services including acute care, surgical care, emergency services, diagnostic services, complex continuing care and rehabilitation. Like many hospitals, the team was experiencing pressure to improve quality of services, and to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness to meet new funding models. In order for these things to happen it was necessary to change the culture of the organization to one focused on performance and outcomes.

In 2012, the senior leadership team of the hospital partnered with BSS to assess individual and organizational behavior. At that time they also engaged a Lean Master Black Belt from Lean Fox Solutions to assess and review key organizational value stream processes, and to identify areas for opportunity and waste elimination. The initial focus of the Lean process centered on the organization's leaders and key value streams – Emergency Services, Surgical Services and Support and Supply distribution. As time went on it became clear that it was necessary to develop a more cross-functional, distributed approach to the Lean process. This led to the development of the “Leaning Forward” program.

“Leaning Forward” was a multi-dimensional strategy designed to both train participants in the methodology and tool kits of Lean and also to develop leadership behaviours by a variety of individuals across the organization. A blended learning style including a flipped classroom approach, mentoring processes, and a virtual delivery model, whereby much of the program's content was delivered via e-learning and web-based modules, were all strategies deployed as part of the program.

### Leaning Forward and Behavioural Sciences

One of the main failings of many leadership development programs is that they don't focus on measuring outputs – what behaviours have changed. In order to overcome this problem, the hospital recognized it needed a way to measure the behavioural changes of the program participants and its leaders. That was provided by behavioural technology developed by Behaviour Science Systems (BSS). In order to measure the effectiveness of the Leaning Forward program, prior to the start of the program, all participants completed an on-line diagnostic instrument that benchmarked their current actions and behaviours. At the completion of the program all individuals completed the diagnostic again, measuring the changes in their behaviour, and this process was repeated at regular intervals thereafter.

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The BSS questionnaire provides individuals and teams with a data-based overview of their current set of behaviours contributing (or not) to the individual and team's levels of performance. Behaviour change was assessed in two ways; the first was to look at the degree to which individuals changed their general behaviour. The BSS diagnostic questionnaire groups behaviours into three main groups (performance accelerating, performance sustaining and performance hindering) and across nine styles within those groups and shows the percentage of time, effort and attention individuals devote to each of them. The first measure of behaviour change looks at the degree to which individuals altered their relative focus on each of these nine styles over the period between when they first completed the diagnostic questionnaire prior to the start of the program and roughly six months later, after completing the program. The second and detailed measure is the degree to which people did what they said they should do to improve performance. The BSS diagnostic questionnaire is in two parts, the second of which is designed to access the subconscious of respondents, enabling them to articulate what they know "in the back of their minds" they need to do to perform best in their jobs. The output of the questionnaire shows the respondent a list of the 20 of these actions seen to be most important for performance improvement.

In addition to assessing the program participants, all of the hospital's leadership team (Managers – Directors – Senior Executive Leadership) completed the Executive Results questionnaire to assess organizational leadership behaviours and culture across the same dimensions. It was an extremely important step to not just understand the behaviours of the individuals participating in the program, but also to understand generally how the leadership in the organization behaved and whether or not the enablers to success for the projects were in place through the general leadership behaviours across the organization.

### **Key Actions**

The key goals of the Leaning Forward program were to:

1. Identify, develop and support current and emerging and new leaders within the organization
2. Equip individuals with a standard approach to project planning, development, implementation and evaluation methodologies by training them on Lean tools and techniques
3. Identify the critical leadership behaviours to support and sustain a Lean program across the organization.

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### **Key Program Components included:**

1. Program application process - The “application” process, purely on a voluntary basis, required that all applicants have a project concept, a project sponsor from senior leadership and support and sign-off from the applicant’s direct leader.
2. Program Kick-Off - At the initiation of the project all participants were required to work on two main action plans. The first focused on personal development / growth opportunities. Utilizing the individual data provided by the BSS diagnostic questionnaires, participants were able to identify the key actions (behaviours) that would have the most impact for performance improvement. A strategy to develop and support these behaviours on an individual level was developed and reviewed with the individual’s leader / sponsor.

The second significant deliverable was the development of a project charter. Every project had a sponsor who signed-off on the application and project charter. The sponsor acted as a mentor and escalation point for the team throughout the project. Sponsors attended project kick-off meetings, training and report-outs throughout the project.

3. Program Training - Over a three-month period, the training program consisted of a flipped classroom model combined with four in-person sessions. In advance of each class, participants were assigned online modules on Lean methodologies with corresponding reading in the assigned textbooks (participants have 11 modules and 2 textbooks) as well as research and thought articles on leadership (particular focus on engagement/motivation).

A review of the modules, a discussion on the literature, and updates on projects were the key aspects of the face-to-face sessions. Between classroom sessions, participants applied their learning by leading a change initiative. “Study halls” were set up to enable informal interaction between individuals.

Classroom sessions were facilitated by the experienced Lean Instructor and supported by a past participant of the program. Study groups during which a special topic or discussion paper was discussed, were also facilitated by past program participants to better extend knowledge translation between the program participants and to build a community of knowledge across the organization.

### 4. Project Implementation

Implementation of projects occurred in parallel to the training program in order to give participants the opportunity to apply learning and tools developed through the training components. Project implementation, depending on the scope, extended beyond training program completion and participants were provided with tools and resources to continue project implementation.

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### 5. Project Evaluation and Report

At the end of each training program all participants participated in a report-out and project update to the leadership of the organization. Participants and project leaders of other programs also provided quick updates on the progress of projects that were underway or concluding.

The report-out provided an opportunity for all participants to demonstrate to the leadership of the organization new skills and expected project outcomes and goals.

In addition, the next wave program participants who were accepted into the program were all invited to the report out so they could experience and learn from the process.

### Results & Conclusion

Identify, develop and support current and emerging and new leaders within the organization

Over the course of 2 ½ years, the hospital completed 4 “waves” of the Leaning Forward program. Thirty-eight staff members participated in the program. Many of the program participants went on to take on formal leadership roles. All program participants took on a leadership role in different projects. There were 19 projects completed through the course of the program. The program also resulted in the creation of Lean Bootcamps (co-led by past participants) that had over 100 people participate to develop an understanding of waste in healthcare

Equip individuals with a standard approach to project planning, development, implementation and evaluation methodologies by training them on Lean tools and techniques

Throughout the project time-line over 300 wastes were identified. Projects implemented resulted in significant efficiency improvements and direct cost savings. One notable project included a reduction of over \$25,000 in direct cost in the laboratory due to changes in ordering practices implemented as a result of the project. A standardized approach to project management including standard project charter tools became the standard operating procedure across the organization. The tools and processes became integrated into the annual operating plan cycle of the organization.

Identify the critical leadership behaviours to support and sustain a Lean program across the organization.

The most significant outcome demonstrated was with respect to the changes driven across the culture of the organization. The program demonstrated that leadership is not about title or position, that everyone at any level can affect positive change.

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**Leaning Forward Program Participants:** Participants demonstrated a 50% average percentage change in general behaviour and a 65% improvement in specific and required behaviors to support project success; notably there was a 7% drop in the level of negative, performance hindering, behaviour.

Specific behaviours identified as high priority and became dominant behaviours identified by the program participants included:

- Pay close attention to how time is spent
- Pay attention to detail
- Respond to situations immediately
- Always do what's promised
- Try to base decisions on hard facts
- Take responsibility for actions
- Try new ways to do things better

**General Leadership Behaviour:** Across the hospital, over the same period of time, the organization showed a general improvement in teamwork supporting behaviours, managing toward objectives and outcome type behaviours as well as developing and sticking to priorities. These were all critical leadership behaviours needed to support the program participants and their projects in moving forward.

Through our extensive experience we know that tools and techniques offered by management strategies such as Lean provide opportunities to improve performance. We also know that for some people and some companies these strategies are more successful than in others. We know and understand that without understanding and ultimately positively changing and adjusting the behaviours of those individuals and the general leadership culture of the organization or work team success of a Lean strategy will be limited. There are opportunities to integrate both and unlock success!

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