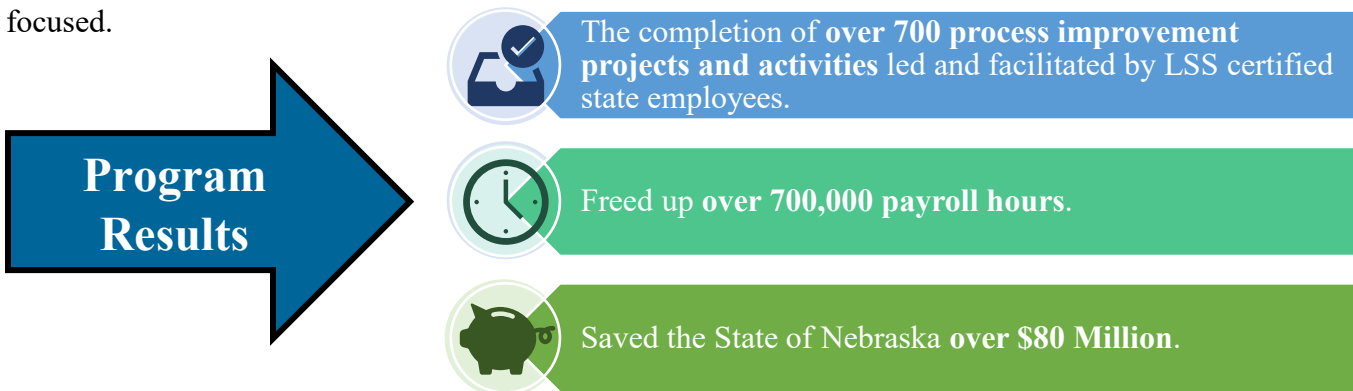


What is Process Improvement?

Process improvement is a formalized method used to examine work processes and procedures to make them more streamlined by reducing steps, time needed to finish a task, and errors and rework. Process improvement gives employees the tools they need to tackle the problems they face in their everyday work.

The Impact of Process Improvement

Since its launch in May 2016, the State of Nebraska’s process improvement program has utilized Lean Six Sigma (LSS) methodology and tools to make state government more effective, more efficient, and customer focused.



Who Does Process Improvement?

The State of Nebraska’s process improvement program is led by the Center of Operational Excellence (COE). The COE’s goal is to help reduce waste and improve efficiencies. However, the COE cannot do process improvement alone and uses full-time, embedded Process Improvement Coordinators (PICs) to carry out day to day process improvement work within state agencies.

To strengthen the process improvement program the COE developed LSS training and certification programs. Since 2016, the COE has successfully trained and certified:



Process Improvement Method Map

As part of continuous improvement goals for 2022, the COE has been developing multiple resources for state employees. These resources will allow state employees to better understand the State's process improvement program and the methods offered by the COE to help meet the agency's process improvement goals. One of the resources is the *Process Improvement Method Map* (see page 5). The tool is designed to help with selecting a COE process improvement method best suited to address a problem within an agency and get desired results.

Process Improvement Method Map Guidance

How to use: Think about the problem you have and starting at the purple cylinder, follow the arrows depending on if the answer is yes or no for each of the questions until it leads you to the appropriate COE method.

Thinking about the problem you are wanting to solve, begin by asking:

What kind of problem do I have?

Question 1: Is the problem easy to fix?

For problems that are easy to fix, the appropriate methods include lean leader project, executive decision, or special project which can be performed within the agency by LSS trained employees or the agency's PIC.

If the problem is easy to fix and a Certified Lean Leader can solve the problem using LSS tools...

Lean Leader Project

Typically performed by a certified lean leader within the agency. A lean leader project is used to maximize value while eliminating waste by focusing on people and culture.

If an Executive Green Belt can solve the problem by using LSS tools to make an informed decision...

Executive Decision

Typically made by an executive green belt in the agency, an executive decision is a high-level business decision that saves money (dollars and/or payroll hours).

If there is a solution in mind, but the project needs to be managed...

Special Project

A special project should be used when there is a clear solution in mind and the project needs a project manager. These projects are executed by the agency's PIC.

If the problem is not easy to fix, move onto question 2.

Question 2: Is the problem an issue with a process?

Problems involving a process usually require more advanced methods to solve. The COE products best suited for these problems are special project (see description above), DMAIC project, or Kaizen event. These methods are performed by the agency's PIC.

If a new process needs to be designed or a current process redesigned, the process has 50+ steps, and timing is not essential to the project...

DMAIC Project

DMAIC projects are used to handle complex or convoluted processes/systems. DMAICs are best used in environments that are already primed for process improvement with communication, leadership, and accountability.

If a new process needs to be designed or a current process redesigned, the process has 50+ steps, and timing is essential to the project...

Kaizen Event

Kaizen events are used when the process needing improving is simple to medium complexity. It is also useful when there is a need for rapid results or when an agency needs to revitalize its process improvement program and influence culture.

If the problem is not an issue with a process, move onto question 3.

Question 3: Need help bringing teammates and ideas together?

Facilitation is the best COE method for when there is difficulty getting teams to communicate or there is a need for sharing ideas. PICs can be utilized to facilitate meetings/events or be brought in to be a mediator.

If help is needed to bring teammates and ideas together...

Facilitation

A facilitation is used to help teammates plan and guide at an event or meeting.

If the problem does not require help bringing teammates and ideas together, move onto question 4.

Question 4: Is the problem educational or cultural?

For problems involving educational or cultural issues within the agency, the best COE methods include agency continued education event or continuous improvement summit. Work with your PIC to determine training and development needs or how best to support a continuous improvement culture.

If the problem is educational or cultural and teammates need further development in process improvement...

Continued Education Event

An agency continued education event is a way for agencies to further develop teammates with the latest skills, knowledge, and abilities in continuous improvement for the State of Nebraska.

If the problem is educational or cultural and sustaining of continuous improvement culture is a concern...

Continuous Improvement Summit

An agency continuous improvement summit involves updating the agency on process improvement progress with a goal of sustaining the culture of continuous improvement.

If the problem is not educational or cultural, move onto question 5.

Question 5: Unsure of process improvement opportunities?

A Survey-Action Plan-Survey is the best COE method to gather more information about the problem and assess the agency for more opportunities for process improvement.

If there is uncertainty surrounding the problem or you are unsure of additional process improvement opportunities...

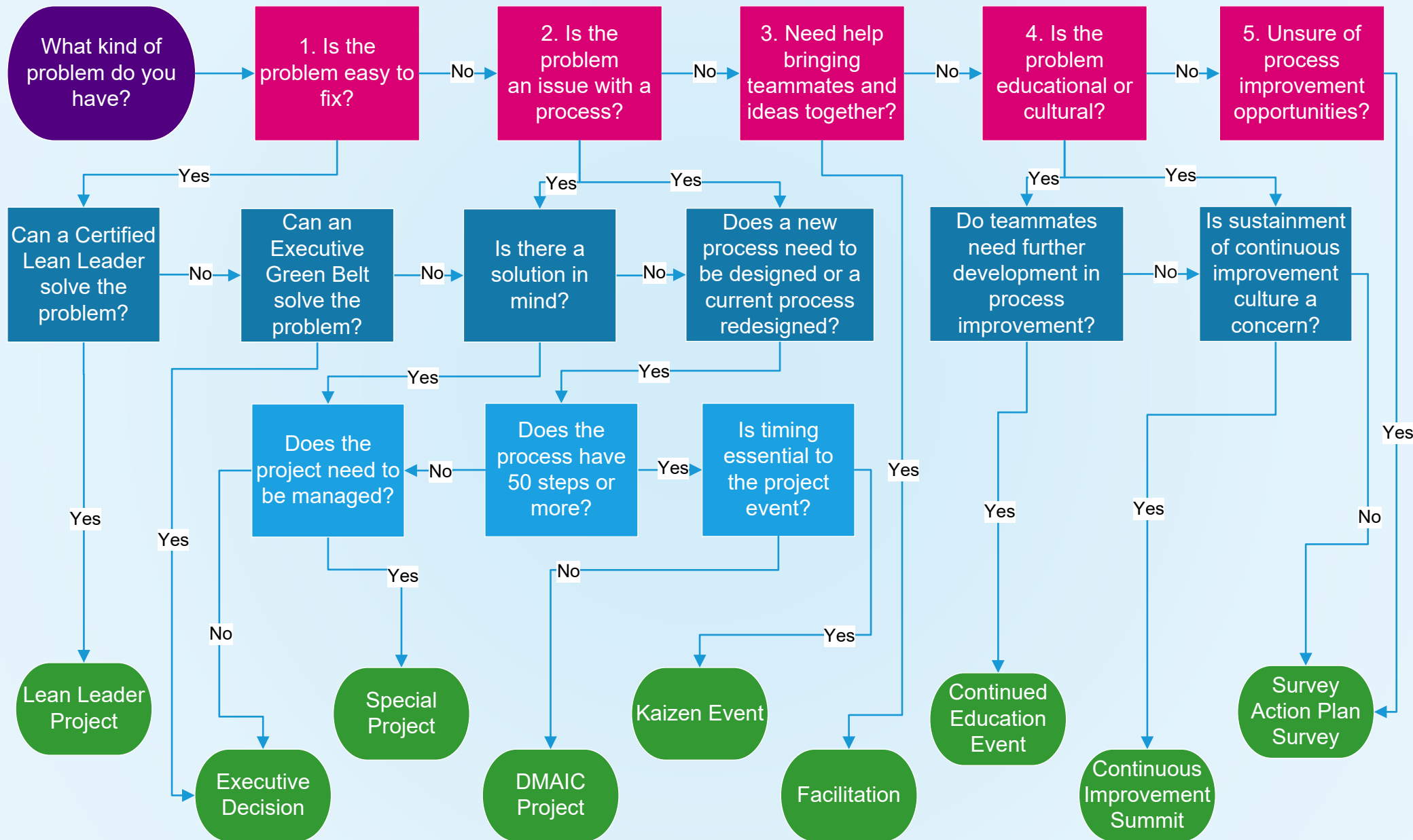
Survey Action Plan Survey

A Survey-Action Plan-Survey or SAS is a formal effort to conduct a large-scale survey for a specific purpose and develop an action plan to improve identified pain points. This survey can be used to address cultural, financial, operational, or other issues.

For further details contact the Center of Operational Excellence, a process improvement coordinator, or visit the COE website at <https://das.nebraska.gov/coe/index.html>

Process Improvement Method Map

This decision tool is designed to help with selecting a continuous improvement product best suited to address a problem within an agency and get desired results. For further information, review the *Process Improvement Method Guide* or contact the director of the Center of Operational Excellence.



Simple, Structured Methods
(Agency Leaders)

Advanced Methods & Mediation
(Process Improvement Coordinator)

Event-based Methods
(Process Improvement Coordinator)