

# Special Project

## What is a Special Project?

A special project is process work that may not have a voice of the customer (VOC) focus. It should be used when there is a clear end-product in mind and the project needs a project manager.



## The Sponsor's Role

The sponsor authorizes the process improvement coordinator (PIC) involvement to start the project. Following authorization, the sponsor will work with the PIC to:

- Clearly define critical customer requirements, milestones, and/or deliverables
- Complete the project charter & preplanning documentation
- Have a financial discussion (use of resources)
  - Discuss overall project plan with timeframe



## Special Project Structure

- Phase 1:** Authorization for process improvement coordinator, documentation, and pre-planning
- Phase 2:** Process improvement coordinator communicates with project team (if there is one), set up project meetings, and conducting meetings
- Phase 3:** Ensuring all deliverables are met
- Phase 4:** Closing out the project and communicating to key stakeholders the project is completed

## Finding Special Projects

Special Projects can be generated from a variety of different places including, but not limited to:

- *Project Parking Lot* - used during a project for ideas outside the project scope
- A need to update/modify a current process already in place
- Sponsor decision to solve a problem as a special project



## Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: How much time is required to complete a special project?
- A: Depends on the size and scope of the project and what the goals and deliverables are. A typical special project can last a few days to several months.
- Q: How do you determine if I need a VOC, milestones, or deliverables?
- A: A VOC is used to collect information from the customers internal and external to the process. Milestones are used to keep the project moving towards its final goals (i.e., important dates for items to be completed). Deliverables are products provided for project completion.
- Q: How is a Special Project different from a DMAIC or Kaizen?
- A: A special project does not always require a VOC or a project team, and the timeframe may vary whereas, DMAICs and Kaizens have VOCs and project teams, and stricter completion schedules.



## Examples of Special Projects

1. Taking a *Parking Lot* idea from a DMAIC project such as "adding more training tables/computers in the training".
2. Creating an Excel sheet to better track employee call-ins on the weekend shifts.
3. Updating the agency's Employee Retention Program by adding more incentives to the program after survey results showed there was a need to do so.



For more information, please reach out to a process improvement coordinator or the director of the Center of Operational Excellence.