



Branding Your Improvement Program As Six Sigma Or Lean?

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Whenever I discuss branding for improvement program in any organization, two terms that come up naturally are [Lean](#) and [Six Sigma](#) ([Lean Six Sigma Training](#)). Among the business excellence community, it has been derived quite some time ago, that we may call it [Lean Six Sigma \(LSS\)](#) and integrate the best of the two approaches. There are some who propose the

integration of TOC with LSS and call it TLS (Theory of Constraints Lean Sigma). However, the question remains – Would you brand your program as TLS or Lean or [Lean Six Sigma](#) or [Six Sigma](#)?

To propose a name for a full-fledged business results improvement program, I would prefer expansion of scope as well as the body of knowledge beyond Lean, Six Sigma, and TOC. This may lead to more neutral terminology like Business Improvement Program or a Business Excellence Program. There are two other candidates, CI and PEX which seem appropriate to many. I consider CI (continuous improvement) or PEX (process excellence) to be a bit limited in scope at least in perception terms. CI and PEX are unlikely to connect well with the demands of creativity & innovation from domains like Marketing or R&D. One may still argue in favor of CI or PEX (I have been in favor of these for a long time) across domains, but experience has taught me that it makes sense to allow for how others perceive them.

While there is nothing that stops us from expanding to Kaikaku (Strategic projects) within



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reasons is the historical connect of the term Lean with “Manufacturing” and Six Sigma with “Variation reduction”.

Within a Business Improvement Program, it also makes sense to embrace few competencies on an “as needed” basis and the branding should allow us to do this. In some of my recent assignments, I have been hearing questions like “Is this Lean?” or “Why to use this tool under Six Sigma?”, or “This is supposed to come under PMBoK”. For understands that the ultimate objective is to realize the strategic organi questions are painful and it is better to find a way to avoid them.

Here is a word of caution. While a branding like “Business Improvement Excellence” may seem larger in scope and appropriate, these terms may be needed in some cultures. The drive for a continuous business improvement be initiated at the top and a core group needs to drive it. For this reason more important than engaging key people. Asking senior improvement and lead as Lean Champions or as a [Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt](#) more inviting as compared to titles such as Business Excellence Practitioner

For an ongoing improvement program that is supposed to be broad in scope, branding requires some serious thinking as words do paint pictures in minds and those pictures need to be inspiring.

If [Lean](#) or [Six Sigma](#) have failed in the past in a company, one needs to look at things differently. The thought process of “It does not work here” demands a senior management workshop with an entirely different perspective. I love conducting such workshops and more often than not, they lead to a change in branding for the improvement program.

While I have highlighted some pros and cons of program branding, one may also like to consider the organizational focus, the cultural setup and process maturity already achieved within the company before reaching a conclusion.

For more on this topic and others check out [Paramonos Research Labs](#), a cost savings & strategy consulting firm that partner with executives on solving complicated problems within their organization using the latest [costs saving data collection tools and methodologies](#).

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Good read Gabriel. One of my observations about process improvement implementation is that the organization wants "better" but apprehensive about "change". LSS and other techniques are sometimes understood by clients as a toolbox of instruments that will "repair" their operation. The problem, in my opinion, about branding an improve ...see more

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