



Background

oeo was selected by Skandia as the preferred partner to work on a significant Business Process Reengineering (BPR) Programme initiated to build Skandia's operational capability and improve business performance following the company's purchase by Old Mutual Group in 2006.

The BPR programme consisted of a number of key operational improvement focus areas including a Process Review Workstream, a People/Development work stream and an IT work stream. Two key objectives were the delivery of hard business benefits through the use of Lean tools and techniques, and the facilitation of skills transfer to both operations managers and a newly-established Lean Improvement team.

The BPR programme ran for 18 months and encompassed the Customer Services Division of Skandia's Life and Pensions business. A series of successful Lean work streams were developed focusing on the delivery of significant improvements in customer service and productivity. The programme included training and coaching for Skandia's team leaders and managers in the operations line. This introduced them to Lean tools and techniques utilised by the world's leading manufacturing and services organisations. Quick win process improvements and work organisation changes were implemented, and a "hit list" of potential IT improvements was generated and integrated into IT business plans.

Skandia has judged the BPR programme to have been a great success with delivery achieved on the key performance improvement targets set for 2007. The programme has also resulted in a range of important legacy benefits in the areas of culture change and improved operations capability throughout the Life and Pensions business. The internal improvement team, now self-sufficient, has since moved outside of a pure operations brief and now acts as an internal consultancy on Lean improvement to the whole of Skandia UK.

The Skandia perspective

The Skandia team:

Vibeke Edvardsen, Process Consultant (1C)

Jon Fielder, Process Analyst (1C)

Andy Knighton, Process Consultant (1C)

Prior to working with **oeo** we had no previous experience or understanding of Lean. The reassuring and 'hands on' nature of the learning and support delivered by **oeo** was key to the performance improvements achieved, and the overall success of the first steps we took into Lean territory.

The **oeo** remit was twofold. First, leading the Lean work streams and latterly supporting ongoing work streams. This controlled changeover from lead to support was underpinned by ongoing coaching and knowledge transfer allowing us to assume more responsibility and encouraging confidence, understanding and thus improving our capabilities.

The **oeo** consultancy team's cross section of skills and styles complimented each other and provided us with the opportunity to work with, and experience a range of ways to approach and implement Lean principles, tools and techniques. The consultants all took an active part in on-going training, knowledge transfer and acted as mentors for a series of 'teach back' sessions and presentations.

In conjunction with **oeo**, who are accredited assessors, we undertook formal accreditation in Lean from Cardiff Business School's Lean Enterprise Research Centre. Our assigned **oeo**/LERC representative provided thorough, clear and concise guidance and support during the assessment and accreditation process. Thanks to the skills and knowledge imparted during **oeo**'s tenure, four Skandia employees achieved 1C accreditation. **oeo** has provided us with a strong understanding of Lean principles and approaches, coupled with a practical approach to implementation. In addition to delivering very tangible and measurable business improvements, this has established a sound and stable footing on which we can build and develop Skandia's Lean and continuous improvement capabilities.

The relationship between **oeo** and Skandia has developed from one of external consultants and customer, to that of colleagues with whom a strong working bond and understanding has been formed. We look forward to continuing to work with **oeo** as part of the ongoing LERC assessment and accreditation programme which **oeo** are continuing to deliver for us.

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