

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Owners and managers are constantly searching for production improvement applications. Few would disagree with the premise that the implementation of such applications is critical in an industry with increasing competition and changing markets and delivery systems. It is precisely those conditions that exist in the construction industry. It is for those reasons that the Lean production tool, A Kaizen Event, is so relevant.

The report's title boasts a result, *significantly improved performance in a week or less*. This should command the attention of every owner and manager of a construction firm. A Kaizen Event, when properly planned, coordinated, and executed, can increase performance, *with little or no capital expense*, in seven significant ways:

1. Increased productivity
2. Reduced inventory
3. Lower setup times
4. Less waste
5. Space use reductions
6. Quality improvement, and/or
7. Order-to-delivery time improvement

Although not identified in the report, a properly conducted Kaizen Event also enhances safety at the workplace and more often than not reduces workers' compensation costs, health care costs, and lost time due to workplace injuries.

To attain improved performance, management must commit to and support the outcome of an event, which is loosely described as the application of Lean using a prescribed methodology in a concentrated area of operations in a short period of time. That methodology is described in the report that includes steps to successfully managing a Kaizen Blitz, a quick review of Lean concepts, a sample time schedule for an event, sample forms for use in conducting an event, and finally a review of the pilot event in a case study format.

In short, the tool and steps to deploy the tool described in this report can open the door to almost immediate improved performance of a contractor's operations regardless of size and with little to no capital expense.