

Lean IT at Michigan Tech

Josh Olson, Chief Information Officer, is championing a transformation to Lean IT. “As an organization, we want to be open to change in our processes and methods and commit to continuous and ongoing improvement,” he says. “Since we’ve started incorporating Lean thinking into our daily work, we’ve seen measurable improvement. The culture is changing. We’re changing. Lean IT is improving the way we provide services to our customers.” Some [examples of how IT is changing](#) are new daily group-ups, project boards, and process mapping.



Group-Ups

The Services Team is using daily group-up meetings to increase awareness among staff and solve problems. The 15 minute morning huddle fosters efficiency, effectiveness, and open, collaborative attitudes within the team. Threats to projects and deadlines are often identified and resolved on the spot. Since they’ve started having the group-ups, their ticket count has decreased significantly, and they’re continuing to set record lows on a regular basis.

Project Board (Cadence Board)

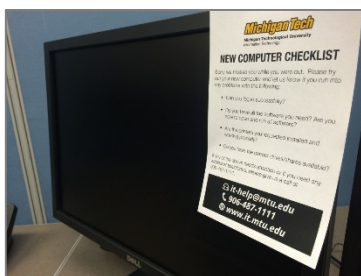
The Enterprise Application Services group has been using a Cadence Board for their Web Focus Project. The low-tech and flexible visualization tool gives visibility to the current workflow and progress and informs the team of each other’s work progress. They can easily see if a team member has become overloaded and quickly readjust the workload.



Kaizen Event—Process Mapping

IT’s Build and Deployment process for new machines was generating a lot of help desk tickets. They completed a process map and identified several areas that could benefit from a kaizen (continuous improvement) event. They are currently tackling

service desk workflow and customer communications, and plan to create a new map to visualize and evaluate the improvements. While changes are still in the early stages, team members already have an increased knowledge of the flow of the deployment process from procurement to the actual builds, are better able to visualize the current workload, have improved internal communications, and have seen more care and diligence in work. The outcome has been faster, better deployments.



Lean Outreach and Connections

- **New Board Member of Statewide Lean Organization.** Theresa Coleman-Kaiser, Associate Vice President for Administration, was elected to the Board of Directors for the [Michigan Lean Consortium](#) (MLC). She will serve a three-year term on the ten-member board, which will begin in August during the organization's annual conference.
- **Manley Presented Red Bead Experiment.** Thirty-nine people from the campus and community experienced Dr. W. Edward Deming's [Red Bead Experiment](#), presented by Jim Manley. Jim is the Managing Director of the Demmer Center for Business Transformation at the Eli Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. Jim learned this workshop from Dr. Deming himself, who used the Red Bead Experiment to provide a simple yet powerful message about how success is directly tied to and limited by the nature of the system one works within.
- **Workshop Held on Lean Concepts.** Jean Cunningham presented a [workshop on understanding Lean concepts](#) using hands-on simulations to 48 campus and community members. Jean is principal of Jean Cunningham Consulting, which provides lean business management services including workshops, kaizen events and strategic coaching. She speaks at Lean conferences and teaches Lean Accounting for Ohio State University's Master of Business Operational Excellence.
- **Copper Country Lean Group Expanding.** The Copper Country Lean Group met at UP Health Systems--Portage in May. Portage Health Rehab presented on how they're using Lean principles in their department, followed by a discussion on visual management. Seven Portage Health employees took advantage of the meeting's proximity by attending the meeting to learn more about Lean. Subsequently, many Portage Health employees attended the campus-wide presentations described above.
- **Students on the Road.** Six members of the Leaders in Continuous Improvement (LCI) student organization went on an [industry trip](#) to Parker Hannifin in Wisconsin. There, they were able to see firsthand the activities and behaviors in a Certified Lean Model Plant. The tour was set up and guided by a recent Michigan Tech alumna, who is a value stream team leader at the plant.
- **Professional Development Day Successful.** The Office of Continuous Improvement presented a workshop on Lean problem solving skills to 120 Michigan Tech employees as part of Auxiliary Services, HR, and Public Safety's joint professional development day. Lean problem solving emphasizes root cause analysis before choosing a solution.



Formal Continuous Improvement Events as of June 30, 2015

Executive Team Area	Active as of 30 June 15	Completed since last report 3 April – 30 Jun 15	Completed FY15 YTD	Completed FY14 Full Year
Academic Affairs	4	1	11	7
Administration	8	3	9	29
Financial Services and Operations	0	0	0	1
Information Services	2	0	1	1
Research	0	0	1	2
Student Affairs and Advancement	1	1	1	4
Total	15	5	23	44