

## **Process improvement professionals from several industries including regional health systems in Northeast Ohio use a common platform to capture solutions to their shared issues**

What do Kaiser Permanente, NASA, Key Bank, Akron Children's Hospital, Kent State University, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland all have in common? Their process improvement leaders are all members of the Northeast Ohio Lean Six Sigma Forum (NEO LSS Forum), a professional group consisting of professionals from 30+ area organizations focused on identifying and sharing best practices across all industries and process spectrums. The group meets quarterly, rotating locations among member organizations. Although the Forum's members are concentrated in Northeast Ohio, the meetings have drawn process improvement professionals from as far away as Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Texas.

Founded only 18 months ago, the NEO LSS Forum has already made a substantial impact to process improvements throughout the member organizations. The meetings provide an opportunity for the hosting company to walk through their process improvement program's history, highlight project successes, and share lessons learned along the way. This allows companies from seemingly disparate industries to capture solutions to shared problems.

Take NASA and Akron Children's Hospital for example. Although their missions seem as different as night and day, they still share some common process challenges. They both have test labs where throughput and quality are critical. And they've both used Lean principles to optimize these test processes. The NEO LSS Forum gave them the opportunity to share these successes with members from industries such as manufacturing, engineering, financial services, government agencies, legal services, and consulting.

Other NEO LSS Forum success stories:

- The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland brought in Lean Six Sigma leaders from Kaiser Permanente and Akron Children's Hospital to help facilitate process improvement training for Federal Reserve employees.
- NASA invited LSS experts from the University of Akron and Key Bank to share data collection and analysis best practices with 8 research and flight centers.
- Akron Children's Hospital hosted various NEO LSS Forum members to help support Kaizen process improvement events.
- University Hospitals and Kaiser Permanente have shared tools to identify, prioritize and track process improvement projects.

Health care companies have traditionally been hesitant to look outside their walls to identify more effective ways of treating the sick and keeping people well. But the same tools and concepts used by manufacturing companies to maximize production quality can be used by hospitals to improve treatment outcomes and reduce clinical variation. The Northeast Lean Six Sigma Forum provides the opportunity to learn how to apply these principles in any process setting.

For more information on the Northeast Ohio Lean Six Sigma Forum, please visit our LinkedIn group or contact Robert Kluttz at 330-348-1340 or [robert.l.kluttz@kp.org](mailto:robert.l.kluttz@kp.org)