



**BE PRO**  
TECHNOLOGIES

# Kaizen

Kaizen is Japanese for ‘a change for better’, which results in ‘continuous improvement’. Kaizen ideology can be traced back to the 1980’s; Kaizen was first adopted in the West with the influx of Japanese car manufacturers brought a wave of new thinking.

Kaizen uses the Japanese logic of bringing improvements internally from within the workplace by listening to those in close proximity to the problem.

## Kaizen Benefits

- Problems are identified at source, and resolved.
- Small improvements which are realized can add up to major benefits for the business
- Improvements, which lead to changes in the business quality, cost and delivery of products, mean a greater level of customer satisfaction, and business growth.
- By involving employees in looking at their environment to bring about change, results in improved morale as people begin to find work easier and more enjoyable.

## Kaizen Event

This is the means by which we get employees involved in Kaizen.

1. Decide upon a section of the business, upon which Kaizen will be implemented.
2. Decide upon a team leader for the team - ensure this person has all the correct training.
3. Bring the team together, and explain the theory behind Kaizen, let the team discuss problems in the workplace.
4. Get the team to discuss as many issues as they would wish to tackle, remember it does not have to be a single issue against which they should focus, several small issues are always worthwhile looking at.
5. Let the team decide which issue(s) is going to be tackled. It is the team that knows best about its environment.
6. Let the team decide what the main causes of concern regarding the issue(s) are.
7. Let the team decide how the issue(s) will be measured - how has the current issue been decided? And how will we monitor the present situation?
8. Information about the issue is gathered.

9. The team should now be in a position to come up with a target situation, let the team look at the merits of different solutions, let the team decide upon target completion, implementation dates.

10. Let the team, decide upon how to bring about the change to the workplace, is it going to be visually communicated? Verbally communicated? (Work-practice changes), etc.

11. Finally let the team decide upon how they will monitor the changes they bring, to see how successful they have been.

## **Kaizen Conclusions**

For a business to realize the true benefits of Kaizen it should form a long-term strategy, which accepts that by involving employees in making their processes better, we all benefit. Getting employees to believe that they are the real experts from which we can achieve '*a change for the better*'

Short-term Kaizen does not work. It could be stated that new quality policies such as Six Sigma, are an extension of Kaizen. If your business is serious about implementing Kaizen into the workplace, then it has to a long-term strategy.