



Product Development Process

Kaizen Team

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Why Do We Do What We Do?

Vision Serve Alliance “Big Data” Project – Working Age Americans Who are Blind or Visually Impaired (ages 18-64)

- 56.4 percent self-report they are not working.
- 29.6 percent (non-blind or visually impaired).
- 4.9 Million People



Why Review This Process?

- Process is Longer Than We would Like It.
- Significant length hurts credibility with customer.
- Aligns with Current Administration Focus
 - Efficiency and Eliminating Waste
- Changing Government Landscape
 - Opportunity to help our Government Partners



The Kaizen Team

Project Sponsors

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The Team

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The Approach

- Focus on Product Addition Process .
- Understand the current state and process.
- Identify waste and areas for improvement.
- Map out an ideal state/future process.
- Kaizen Approach – Improvement.



Assumptions

- Process is focused on NPA initiated projects.
- Base process for all product areas.
- NPA has capable internal resources to complete process.
- Should incorporate key take-aways before PLP goes live (June '20226)
- Parking Lot Items.



Deliverables

1. Key Issues, Areas of waste, and Potential Improvements .
2. Gantt chart of Ideal Future Process.
3. List of process changes and stakeholders.
4. List of process tasks required by statute or regulation.
5. Gantt chart of Existing Process.
6. Slide deck and presentation .



PL Addition Process: How Long Does It Take?***

Current State/Process:

- 1 Year, 4 Months (as mapped).

Ideal Future State/Process:

- 6 Months (as mapped).

****This measures average time from Assignment approval to submission to the Commission.*



General Areas of Waste

1. Understanding of the process and expectations.
2. Transparency.
3. Accountability, Leadership, and Ownership.



Understanding the Process

Issues

- Inconsistent knowledge and experience among NPAs.
- Incomplete or inaccurate information provided to NIB.
- Use of outdated forms.

Understanding the Process

Potential Improvements

- Provide more frequent training to NPAs.
- “Consult” meetings at beginning of key stages of process.
- Improve or create document governance process.



Transparency

Issues

- No system or visible project tracker available to stakeholders or senior leaders.
- Email primary tool for communication or document sharing.



Transparency

Potential Improvements

- Short-term: Utilize platforms like Teams, slack, or MS Project to communicate and share files.
- Long-term: PLP being developed by NIB
Launching mid-2026. Cannot wait for this.



Accountability

Issues

- Leadership of Overall Process and Ownership of Specific Tasks, Firm Deadlines.
- No single, recognized Project Manager across operational units or lines of business.
- No metrics or KPIs of activity or results.
- Fuzzy deadlines.
- Lack of transparency of process amplifies accountability issues.



Accountability

Potential Improvements

- Single team member from NIB oversees and responsible for management of PL Addition projects.
- Additions based on required documents rooted on Statute only:
 - Suitability- Capability. Capacity, quality, employment potential (41 U.S.C. 8501-8506. chapter 51 2.2, Ops Memo 21 and 22)
 - Price- 41 USC 8501-8506 chapter 51 2.2- 2.7. Commission pricing policies 51.600 series
- Develop and publish NPA metrics on performance with process. (Similar to On-Time Delivery Metrics).
- Process needs firm deadlines, timetables, and task ownership.
- Performance management.

Parking Lot

- Pricing process – four stakeholders, four methodologies.
- Business Case Analysis (BCA) - relevance
- AbilityOne Commission – exercise statutory authority on price and PL additions.
- Delegate responsibility to CNAs.



Thank You!

“Improvement usually means doing something that we have never done before.”

— *Shigeo Shingo*