



An Phríomh-Oifig Staidrimh
Central Statistics Office

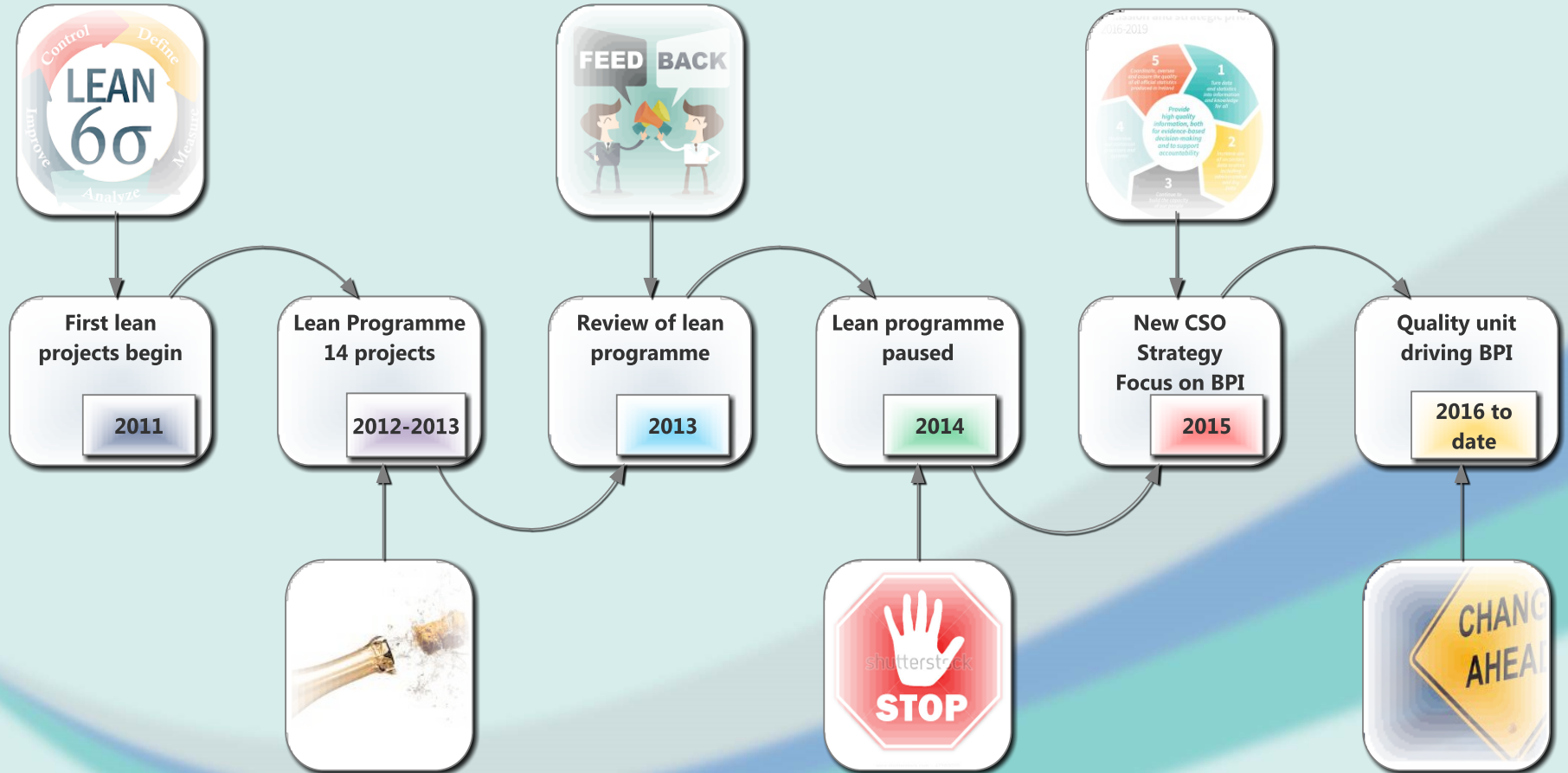
The challenge of change when implementing lean

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Timeline of lean is CSO





Evolution of lean in CSO

- External driver of reduced resources during financial crisis - can we systematically explore how we can redesign our operations to do ‘more with less’ or ‘the same with less’?
- Other external drivers from key users like Eurostat – improve the timeliness / quality of some key outputs while meeting the demand for new outputs
- Researched BPI methodologies - felt Lean Six Sigma a very good fit for CSO





Summary of what we did

- Proof of concept - process mapping of 3 different survey operations - showing what is possible when you understand the 'as is'
- Careful selection of 1st wave of LSS projects – you want the process to succeed ! Don't go for the 'worst' problem you have initially !
- Very careful re the message – “it's about the process, not the person” and “It's all about improvement, not about blame”.





Application of LSS in CSO – how we did it and what we found

- Project selection - working with the Quality Manager, managers and senior management team suggested areas for review
- Very important = problem identification and definition + clear project scope
- Training – 5 days introductory training in LSS / business process improvement (external trainer) with in-built review days to monitor progress against project schedule (around 12-14 weeks)
- Hands on Coaching and mentoring from Quality Manager – acted as independent presence in the project. A ‘fresh pair of eyes’ looking at current process operations
- Each project went through the **DMAIC** structure in a systematic manner with no rushing to judgement and a strong emphasis on data underpinning analysis of the problem and solution identification and prioritisation





What we found - TIMWOODS

Areas of waste that we found:

- **TRANSPORT - unnecessary movement of data:** data moving on a regular basis between different IT systems and different layers of staff, movement of paper questionnaires
- **INVENTORY – maintaining excess quantities of data:** large number of datasets and programmes leading to process complexity, lack of clarity and process risk
- **MOTION – unnecessary movement:** hunting for data on the system,
- **WAITING – not working while waiting:** data capture being batched into large groups before data cleaning ; waiting for business register updates ; decisions from managers





TIMWOODS continued

- **OVER-PROCESSING** – doing more work than is really necessary: over-editing (data checking). A lot of editing happening with no real impact on final aggregates
- **OVER-PRODUCTION** – producing more than is needed: collecting variables which are not used; maintaining datasets which will not be used. **This is the worst type of waste since it tends to drive all other wastes**
- **DEFECTS** – producing products/services that do not meet customer expectations: incorrect addresses for post-outs, quality of sampling frame (birthing/death process on business register)
- **SKILLS** – waste of staff intellect & skills: Staff resources and skills not being properly utilised. Work drifting up to management levels (sometimes a function of other wastes above, eg inventory levels)





Initial Success





Some benefits

Retail Sales

- Index published earlier – now within 4 weeks of end of ref month (instead of t+8 weeks)
- Cost reduction – running costs halved (saving €170k)

Quarterly Earnings

- Timeliness improvement – saving 3 weeks on prov release and more on final release
- Staffing of Survey reduced by 42% reflecting a cost saving of €250 k p.a.
- Reduction in the no. failed edits
- Improvement in response rates





Followed by.....





If it is all going great why do we feel so uncomfortable?

- 14 LSS projects completed - 80 staff trained. Seems to be going well, yet....
- Follow through on project recommendations uneven – are improvements being sustained?
- Project selection - are we getting the right ones? Are the projects all coming from the same areas of the Office?
- Issues with identification of new projects
- Are we happy with the role senior management are playing in the process – can we make it stronger?
- Are we happy that our current model can sustain over time – that it won't wither on the vine: “do you remember when we tried LSS for a few years?....”





Feedback received

- Lack of clarity on purpose of lean – seen as threat rather than opportunity
- Language not understood – technical
- Here comes more change !!!!!
- Burden on “business as usual” – no support
- No sense of urgency – culture





Lean Programme paused

- CSO Statement of strategy updated
- CSO 2020 launched
- New focus on improving process quality, output quality, customer service and methodology
- Major organisational change
- Lean programme had to adapt and learn from the past





New Approach

- New support areas formed in 2016 - Quality and Methodology – multi disciplinary team
- Keep impact and burden on day to day business to a minimum
- Process mapping and process review projects – identify and implement improvements
- Set common baseline and improve consistency using GSBPM
- Build element of governance into changes





New Approach

- Still very much a work in progress
- Need additional supports for key elements of:
 - Assurance
 - Governance
 - Communications
 - Engagement
 - Future work/projects





Lessons learned by CSO

- Senior Management need to invest in outcome – both strategically and visibly
- Governance is essential if the change and improvement is to be maintained?
- Measurement is key for sustainability
- Sell the benefits – effort v reward
- Provide real support to survey owners so business as usual continues





Lessons learned by CSO

- You can never communicate enough – but people still have difficulty in hearing the message
- Pick the correct projects to ensure success initially (but remember to celebrate also)
- Take a risk based approach – e.g. GDPR
- Deal with resistance early
- Reinforce change and improvement through training and continuous engagement





Most important lessons learned

- Remain positive
- Be determined and adaptable
- Have (or develop) a sense of humour or a thick skin



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