

JR Automation Operationlizes Lean Six Sigma with LeanDNA

JR Automation was preparing to initiate a company-wide Lean Six Sigma launch as a way to exceed customer expectations in a rapidly growing market. As part of this, the company wanted a system they could implement immediately to avoid a lengthy, difficult implementation of a custom solution built in Sharepoint Excel and other disconnected systems. On top of that, they wanted a system that was easy to use, low-cost, and low maintenance.

The company knew that it needed to strike a balance. They needed a tool designed for Lean Six Sigma that would promote best practices and enable effective, collaborative, and measurable project management. At the same time, JR Automation understood the initial difficulty and future limitations of a custom solution. Could JR Automation find the right tool designed for Lean Six Sigma to support a company-wide launch and ongoing Lean Six Sigma sustainability?

Key Challenges

- Avoid the traditional approach of managing lean projects through spreadsheets or custom development. JR Automation's goal — was to find a piece of software and implement immediately to — eliminate negative experience
- Find a tool built for lean factories with the right amount of useful features without being overpriced
- Make it easier to review Lean projects and ensure that the most important projects and tasks are being worked
- Have all Lean Six Sigma initiatives and status in one place that is highly visible throughout the company

OVERVIEW

Industry

Industrial Manufacturing

Total Savings with LeanDNA

- Millions of dollars in project savings in less than a year
- 100s of active and completed projects

Customer Objective

- Launch Lean Six Sigma with an easy-to-use, configurable tool

LeanDNA Benefits

- Legitimized Lean Six Sigma initiatives throughout the company
- Company-wide transparency of Lean Six Sigma programs
- Widespread user adoption
- Provides best practice framework for accountability and communication
- Helps monitor project progress and value
- Improve utilization of scarce human resources like Black Belts



LeanDNA lets my team on the floor get projects done while also giving visibility to our board and leadership.

— John Rokus,
VP of Lean and Continuous Improvement

The LeanDNA solution

After comparing LeanDNA with other Lean Six Sigma management solutions, JR Automation selected and quickly implemented LeanDNA in October 2016.

“As far as software implementations go, I would call this one pretty much painless,” says John Rokus, VP of Lean and Continuous improvement. A core group of approximately 30 managers were trained in LeanDNA at launch, partnering with LeanDNA’s team of customer success experts to roll the program out. From there, a one time load of all employees, a simple sign-on process, and intuitive navigation enabled many users to get started immediately with little to no formal training.

Results

Partnering with LeanDNA helped JR Automation ensure a successful launch of lean and Six Sigma. Since launch, JR Automation has quadrupled the size of its Lean Six Sigma team, initiated hundreds of projects, and has saved hundreds of thousands of dollars.

LeanDNA is an integral part of continuous improvement. “All of our Lean Six Sigma progress metrics are in the tool, in data summaries that everyone can see. We use LeanDNA to justify that the most important tasks are being worked,” says Rokus. LeanDNA is used real-time in standup meetings with Black Belts and in meetings with the executive team.

Day-to-day, the tool is used as a best practice framework for accountability and communication. Rokus says, “Each week, I live and die by the color-coded project status and automated reminders in LeanDNA. I can see if there’s a project that needs help and jump in as necessary. My team likes the My Assignments page, which alerts them daily. We all have a pulse on our individual progress and on the factory as a whole.”

LeanDNA Benefits

LeanDNA quickly became a critical part of JR Automation’s Lean Six Sigma initiatives, and has helped drive success to this day.

Key benefits include:

- **100% Transparency:** “Transparency around improvement is paramount. A software package like LeanDNA that provides 100% transparency helps reduce the fear surrounding the launch of Lean Six Sigma, says Rokus.
- **Top-Down View of All Projects:** JR Automation uses LeanDNA’s out of the-box tools and built in filters to get data on how projects are progressing, stagnating, or aging.
- **Configurable Fields Align With Company Needs:** “JR Automation had unique department names, building locations, and specific initiative approvers that were configured into the LeanDNA software. It felt like we were using a system customized for our needs, not someone else’s,” said Rokus.
- **High-Quality Visual Reports:** Built-in, printable reports convey the importance and effectiveness of lean at all levels of the company, more than Excel spreadsheets.
- **Easy Board-Level Communication:** LeanDNA allows for easy communication of Lean Six Sigma projects, resources, and results to the board and CEO.
- **Widespread Company Usage:** Within six months of launch, 3 out of 4 departments within JR Automation had been touched within the initiative to deploy Lean Six Sigma.
- **Cross-Site Visibility:** JR Automation can easily view projects and progress across 22 areas in 8 different sites around the US