
Operational Excellence Through Lean and Continuous Improvement Training Course

10 – 21 May 2027
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

Operational excellence through Lean and continuous improvement is a ten-day training course for operations leaders at strategic level, culminating in an operational excellence deployment plan for their site or service. Many organisations run improvement projects that deliver short-term gains and then fade because daily routines, standards and leadership habits stay unchanged. The approach builds an operating system in which value streams, standard work, visual daily management and structured problem solving reinforce each other, led by managers at every tier. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in operational excellence through Lean and continuous improvement.

The Business Case

Operations that rely on heroic effort lose capacity to waiting, rework, breakdowns and unclear priorities. A Lean operating system makes problems visible early, gives teams a standard way to solve them and connects improvement work to the few objectives that matter. Leaders who build these routines release capacity, raise consistency and create a workforce that improves the operation without waiting for projects.

- Productivity and Lead Time: Improve as waste is removed from value streams and work flows to customer demand.
- Quality and Equipment Effectiveness: Rise as standard work, error proofing and overall equipment effectiveness tracking reduce variation and losses.
- Sustained Improvement Rate: Increases when daily management and leader standard work keep gains in place and generate new ones.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Lean Principles Value, Value Stream, Flow, Pull and Perfection: Frame waste removal and flow design in Sessions 1 to 4.
- ISO 13053 Quantitative Methods in Process Improvement Six Sigma: Defines the DMAIC methodology used for data-led problem solving in Sessions 6 and 7.
- Hoshin Kanri Policy Deployment: Aligns breakthrough objectives with daily improvement through catchball in Session 8.
- Plan-Do-Check-Act and A3 Thinking: Structure everyday problem solving and coaching in Sessions 5 and 9.



Intended Participants

- Leaders accountable for the output, cost and quality of plants, sites or service operations.
- Heads of continuous improvement and excellence functions who design improvement systems.
- Senior managers who run tiered performance meetings and allocate improvement resources.
- Directors leading Lean or Six Sigma deployments across several sites.

The programme serves manufacturing and process industries, logistics, healthcare and shared service operations.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to diagnose waste and flow constraints in a value stream using current-state mapping.
2. Participants will be able to design future-state flow using standard work, pull systems and visual controls.
3. Participants will be able to construct a tiered daily management system with clear escalation.
4. Participants will be able to lead structured problem solving with A3 and DMAIC.
5. Participants will be able to deploy breakthrough objectives through Hoshin Kanri.
6. Participants will be able to justify a deployment plan that builds a lasting continuous improvement culture.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Operational Excellence and Lean Principles

What makes an operation excellent, and why do improvement efforts fade?

- Operational Excellence as an Operating System
- Lean Principles and Customer Value
- The Eight Wastes in Production and Services
- Operational Excellence Maturity Assessment
- Gemba Observation Methods

Day 2: Value Stream Mapping

Where does time and value leak across the end-to-end flow?

- Current-State Value Stream Mapping
- Lead Time, Process Time and Inventory Analysis
- Takt Time and Demand Analysis
- Future-State Value Stream Design
- Value Stream Improvement Plan



Day 3: Flow, Pull and Levelling

How is work made to flow at the pace of demand?

- One-Piece Flow and Cell Design
- Kanban and Pull Systems
- Heijunka Production Levelling
- SMED Changeover Reduction
- Flow in Office and Service Processes

Day 4: Stability, Standards and Equipment

How is a stable base built for improvement?

- Standard Work and Work Instructions
- 5S Workplace Organisation
- Error Proofing Poka-Yoke
- Total Productive Maintenance Pillars
- Overall Equipment Effectiveness Measurement

Day 5: Visual and Daily Management

How do teams see performance and act on it every day?

- Visual Management Boards and Indicators
- Tiered Daily Huddles and Escalation
- Short-Interval Control
- A3 Problem Solving for Daily Issues
- Daily Management System Design

Day 6: Six Sigma Define, Measure and Analyse

How are complex, chronic problems scoped and quantified?

- DMAIC Project Selection and Charter
- Voice of the Customer and Critical-to-Quality Trees
- Measurement System Analysis
- Process Capability and Baseline Performance
- Root Cause Analysis With Data

Day 7: Six Sigma Improve and Control

How are solutions proven and made to stick?



- Solution Generation and Selection
- Pilot Testing and Design of Experiments Overview
- Statistical Process Control Charts
- Control Plans and Response Plans
- Project Handover and Benefits Tracking

Day 8: Hoshin Kanri and Improvement Portfolios

How is improvement effort aligned with what matters most?

- Hoshin Kanri X-Matrix
- Catchball Between Leadership Tiers
- Improvement Portfolio Selection and Prioritisation
- Kaizen Event Planning
- Benefits Validation With Finance

Day 9: Continuous Improvement Culture and Leadership

What do leaders do differently in an operational excellence culture?

- Leader Standard Work
- Gemba Walks and Coaching Questions
- Improvement Capability Building and Roles
- Recognition and Employee Suggestion Systems
- Sustaining Audits and Layered Process Audits

Day 10: Applying Operational Excellence Through Lean

How are the tools combined into a deployment plan for a real operation?

- Maturity Assessment of a Participant Operation
- Value Stream Priorities and Improvement Portfolio
- Daily Management and Leader Standard Work Design
- Peer Challenge of Deployment Plans
- Operational Excellence Deployment Plan Presentation

Methodology

The programme combines structured exercises, simulation and data workshops. Participants run a production and service simulation over several rounds, applying flow, pull, standard work and daily management between rounds and measuring the effect. Data workshops apply DMAIC tools to sample process data, and every tool is then applied to an operation each participant brings.

- Suggested activity: Mapping the value stream of a hospital discharge process.
- Suggested activity: Running a multi-round Lean simulation of an assembly line.



- Suggested activity: Leading a tier-two huddle using a live visual board.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes an operational excellence deployment plan for their site or service. It contains a maturity assessment, current and future value stream maps, an improvement portfolio aligned through an X-matrix, a daily management design, leader standard work and a capability-building timeline, ready for approval by the operations leadership team.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is operational excellence through Lean suitable for leaders without a Lean or Six Sigma background?

Yes. It is designed for operations and improvement leaders at senior level. It assumes management experience but no prior Lean or Six Sigma training, and builds the tools from first principles.

Which standards and models underpin operational excellence through Lean and continuous improvement?

It rests on Lean principles, the DMAIC methodology defined in ISO 13053, Hoshin Kanri policy deployment and the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle with A3 thinking.

How is the operational excellence deployment plan used at work?

It gives you a sequenced plan to build the operating system in your own area, with priorities, routines and roles ready to present to your leadership team and start the following week.

How does operational excellence through Lean differ from strategy execution programmes?

It concentrates on how operations run and improve every day, while strategy execution programmes focus on translating corporate strategy into objectives and initiatives.