

A PLAN FOR CHANGE: Fostering a Culture of Continuous Improvement

(presented by the Quality Enhancement Unit)

Change does not necessarily have to be difficult! Lean times dictate to us that embracing continuous improvement is not only the right thing to do; it is the thing that will secure our viability as an organization. Fostering a culture of continuous improvement is a cultural shift. Success, as measured by efficiency and sustainability, can be realized when continuous improvement becomes part of our daily work that focuses on identifying ways and opportunities to make the organization better.

In order to increase the probability of success, the Quality Enhancement Unit is developing a combination of approaches can be used to increase knowledge, boost skills, improve processes, and innovate. Key components are as follows:

1. Measure:

- a. Design and implement measurement tools that gauge the continuous improvement attitude of the Department at appropriate points.
- b. Assess data that we currently have to establish baselines and identify messages within the data that provide relevant information about our culture.

2. Communicate:

- a. Create and maintain communication that is relevant, timely, interesting and targets specific audiences.
- b. Communication efforts include:
 - Revised process improvement website (completed)
(<http://www.ncdot.gov/programs/cpi>)
 - New project application form (link included on revised website)
 - Process improvement database (link included on revised website)
 - Recent innovations database (pending)
 - New Continuous Improvement Newsletter (pending)
 - Webinars

3. Train:

- a. Develop outreach program that focuses on innovation and continuous improvement.
- b. Sensitize employees to the indicators that reveal when a process is not working optimally and teach the basic tools that are needed to improve the process.
- c. Promote innovations that have been implemented successfully in a Division and encourage the employees to build on it or use it as a catalyst for improving a different process that may not be working well.

4. Innovate:

- a. Focus on exchange of innovative ideas at all levels of the Department
- b. Develop and implement new methods to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department.

5. Celebrate:

- a. The current Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) Program is being updated to embrace the continuous improvement culture change within NCDOT. It will provide a forum for continuing education, introduction to innovative products and techniques, and other opportunities to enhance the organization and its employees.
- b. A new and improved Continuous Improvement Conference format will reward employees at all levels for driving change and innovation throughout NCDOT.

The overall goal is to shift the culture of this Department to one that embraces continuous improvement and cultivates it as an organizational value.