



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Continuous improvement is an ongoing process that seeks to eliminate non-value-added activities while driving product and process improvements. It can be applied to all aspects of a business. The basic rewards of continuous improvement activities are sustained profitability and business growth.

Continuous improvement should be a standard process ingrained in the supplier's business, not simply performed to achieve a requirement of Harley-Davidson. All levels of an organization must be committed to the process in order to achieve success.

Continuous improvement begins with identification of a specific task or series of tasks where improvement can be made. This identification should be solicited from employees but may also originate through customer and supplier relationships. While identification of an improvement opportunity may be the result of a corrective action, the true benefit of the process is proactive identification.

Once a continuous improvement project with a measurable objective has been identified, a cross-functional team should be deployed. The team will:

1. Analyze the issue
2. Gather baseline information to determine current status
3. Brainstorm ideas to achieve the objectives of the project
4. Thoroughly evaluate these ideas
5. Develop an action plan complete with target completion dates and responsible parties

This project plan must be written and available to your Harley-Davidson purchasing representative upon request. If the continuous improvement activity is the result of a CAR issued by Harley-Davidson, the project plan must be sent to the purchasing representative as indicated in the instructions of the CAR.

Harley-Davidson has several full-time and part-time resources to support Continuous Improvement. Suppliers are responsible for their own continuous improvement activities, but may contact Harley-Davidson for assistance and possible involvement in the project. The quest for continuous improvement should be aggressive; but, must be prioritized based on benefit and available resources. Successful projects remain focused on their objectives through completion and are driven by teams consisting of individuals who add value to the process. Team membership may change to ensure individuals are involved at specific critical points where they can have an impact on the project.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT READINGS / REFERENCES

Kaizen, by Masaaki Imai

Random House Business Division, 1986

The Machine That Changed the World, by James Womack and Daniel Jones
Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990

Lean Thinking, Banish Waste and Create Wealth in Your Corporation,
by James Womack Simon and Schuster, 1996

Toyota Production System, by Yasuhiro Monden
Industrial Engineering and Management Press, 1993

The Goal, by Eliyahu M. Goldratt
The North River Press, 1992

Business Process Improvement, by H. James Harrington
McGraw Hill, Inc., 1994

Total Improvement Management, by H. James Harrington
McGraw Hill, Inc., 1995

Managerial Engineering, Techniques for improving quality and productivity in the workplace: C.E.D.A.C. MODEL, by Ryuki Fukuda
Productivity, Inc., 1983

The Memory Jogger, A pocket guide of tools for continuous improvement
Goal / QPC, 1996

13 Branch St. Methuen, Ma 01844
508-685-3900

Harley-Davidson Supplier Continuous Improvement Methodology,
Volumes # 1 and # 2, 1995