



Event: Lean Training Event

Speaker(s): Blue Cross Blue Shield Panel: Chris Maier, Cindy Lewis, Maureen Counsell, Phil Berry, Valdis Revalds and Bilal Memon

Date: August 20, 2010

Location: Blue Cross Blue Shield in Southfield, MI



The Michigan Lean Consortium (MLC), along with the Oakland University Pawley Lean Institute and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan in Southfield, recently hosted a benchmarking event at Blue Cross Blue Shield (BSBSM) in Southfield. The focus of this event was to introduce lean business thinking and present different ways to make your workplace more efficient.

The event began with a continental breakfast followed by an executive overview by Chris Maier, the Vice President of Claims, Enrollment, and Billing. There were several different presentations held by the panel followed by a panel Q & A. The panel consisted of Chris Maier, Cindy Lewis, Maureen Counsell, Phil Berry, Valdis Revalds and Bilal Memon who spoke on many topics including Continuous Improvement (CI), Principles and Practice (P & P), Huddles which are short, positive meetings that focus the team every day, and Brown Bags which are monthly training sessions that work as a refresher.

"Many participants came to me and my staff and shared how much they liked the whole experience. We had an audience that was very participative, engaged, and inquisitive," said Phil Berry, MLC Ad Hoc Board Member. "That caused the excitement and energy in the auditorium to build. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves while learning and absorbing."

The day continued with five different CI displays. Attendees were gathered into small groups and rotated to each display to listen to each presentation. The day ended with



feedback and another Q & A, as well as upcoming news and events.

"This MLC benchmarking event was very interesting and informative," said Amanda Benjamin, project coordinator at the Oakland University Pawley Lean Institute. "I particularly enjoyed hearing from some of the different continuous improvement teams

on how they had implemented lean, the progress they have made so far, and how they overcame resistance and encouraged buy-in from their team members."

The event had 50 attendees and 65% of them were members of the MLC. The mission of the MLC is to offer a diverse network of knowledgeable lean professionals who come together to share innovative practices. The organization aims to create a lean culture in Michigan to ensure sustainable competitive advantage, which could translate into healthier businesses that offer more job opportunities leading to economic growth in the state.

The charter members of the MLC include: Amway, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, DTE Energy, Johnson & Johnson, The Lean Learning Center, Northwestern Michigan College, the Oakland University Pawley Lean Institute and the Michigan Shingo Prize through The Right Place. For more information, visit www.michiganlean.org.