

Transformation Program

Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of the general framework for lean transformation. It consists of three major levels represented by 1) Top management; 2) Performance improvement (PI) & middle managers; 3) Front line professionals in which the environment and conditions necessary for a successful lean transformation are created.

The PDSA cycle is the fundamental process improvement methodology used by lean to eliminate waste at an organization. Therefore, you might start thinking about the lean transformation as an *adjustment* to your current PDSA cycle.

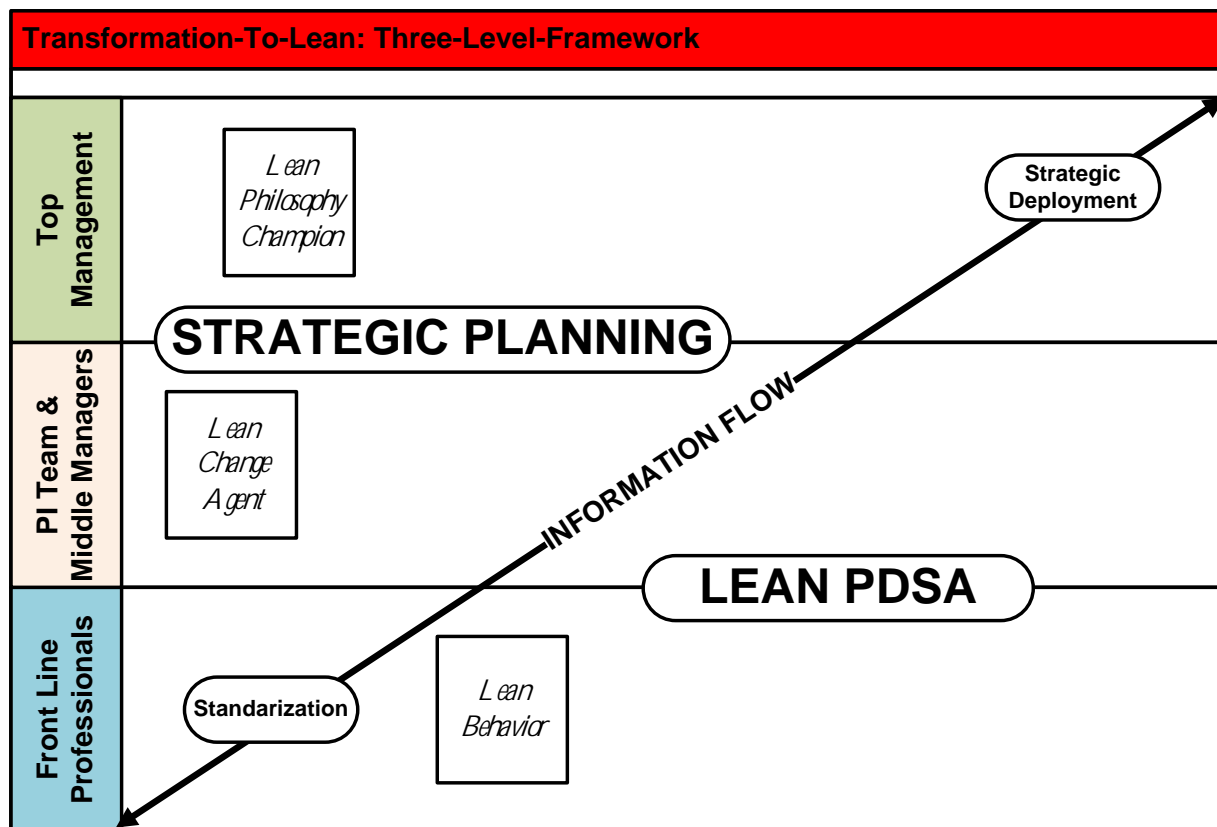


Figure 1 - Transformation-To-Lean: Three-Level-Framework

Top Management: Two components are needed in creating a structure for lean transformation:

- *Lean Philosophy Champion & Strategic Deployment:* The lean champion should have broad-based operational support through the members at various levels of leadership in the organization and in many departments of the hospital system. The higher in the organization the lead person, the more likely that the lean transformation effort will be implemented and sustained. All employees will understand the importance of this effort when a person of responsibility for the

hospital system leads it. Lean champion is the leader and advocate of redesign throughout the organization. His or her team should review information gathered at various stages of the redesign process, determine whether the information is valid and identify potential strategies for improvement. The members of the champion's team are also key in assisting with the cultural change within the organization. It is also important to establish vision from which the lean transformation process will be viewed. The vision will serve as a guide to the lean transformation efforts and will help focus strategic deployment. Because health care systems are very complex, and processes of care are so interrelated, multiple concurrent visions seem both valuable and necessary for successful lean transformation. Therefore, it is necessary for the strategic deployment to cover the following areas: quality, safety, customer service, efficiency, architecture/physical environment, and workforce development (including physician development). All of the strategic deployment needs to be surrounded and embedded in the culture of the lean organization.

Process Improvement (PI) Team & Middle Managers: This group prioritizes the actual lean projects at your organization and communicates the results to top management and front line professionals. This group must include individuals with in-depth training on lean concepts. They must be competent to analyze and interpret the data.

- *Lean Change Agent: They are given the ownership and accountability for implementing and sustaining change in their organizations without power and position to drive it. They must lead others to and through implementation of lean change activities by persuasion, influence, demonstration, negotiation, and teaching. Lean change agents must be skilful in creating business cases for improvements and changes. They need to know how to gain agreement, commitment, cooperation and support from their bosses and front line professionals. All of the change implementation needs to be surrounded and embedded in the culture of the lean organization.*

Front Line Professionals: This group carries out most of the actual lean projects at your organization. They know the processes and the problems that exist in your organization. Front line professionals include individuals that receive training on lean concepts and tools over time. They must be competent to gather, analyze, and interpret the data. The key element at this level is:

- *Lean Behavior & Standardization. Standardized work is one of the most powerful lean tools. Professionals that do the work on the floor can often best document the current best practices. Establishing standardized work relies on collecting and recording data as it actually happens. Such standardized practices serve as the baseline for kaizen or continuous improvement. As the standard is improved, the new standard becomes the baseline for further improvements, and so on. Standardizing the work adds discipline to the culture, an element that is frequently neglected but essential for lean transformation. Standardized work also supports audits, promotes problem*

solving, and involves team members in developing safety guards (poka-yokes). All of the standardization efforts need to be surrounded and embedded in the culture of the lean organization.