

# Guidon Performance Solutions: LeanSigma for Call Centers

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## **What is LeanSigma?**

LeanSigma is a combination of two process improvement methodologies, Lean and Six Sigma, into a single, coordinated approach to reduce waste, improve process flow and drive variation from outcomes. LeanSigma measures and analyzes processes from the point of the customer and strives to eliminate anything that does not deliver value in the eyes of the customer.

## **What can LeanSigma do for a call center?**

LeanSigma has helped call centers improve average handle time, reduce wait times, reduce hand-offs by delivering first call resolution and improved productivity by linking volume to staffing levels. Very often call centers are able to achieve double digit gains in quality and services levels as well as reduce costs significantly.

## **A call center manager might feel like asking you, “Where have you been all my life?” so to speak. How did call centers survive before LeanSigma came along?**

Call centers have always focused on productivity, handle time and other key metrics but have generally focused on technology solutions for improvements. These deliver some improvements they do not engage the agents in the improvement process which is a key dimension of LeanSigma.

## **What management techniques preceded it?**

Business process reengineering has been around call centers for quite some time. These approaches have typically been employed by engaging a few experts in analyzing the processes and implementing new improvements.

## **For call center agents, what is a Sigma Kaizen Breakthrough Event like?**

A SigmaKaizen event is an intensive, collaborative improvement methodology that relies on the principles of LeanSigma but engages the process owners and those who support the target process to delivery rapid, real time improvements. Typically the call center agent gets the opportunity to learn some basic tools and principles and then step outside their own process and apply what they have learned. Within 5 days, the agent has had the opportunity to effect change in areas they might have wanted to address in the past but had not had the empowerment or trust to do so.

## **Do you serve refreshments? Is it an exciting time for them? Do they feel nervous?**

Sigma Kaizen events are normally exciting but the experience starts differently for each individual. Some who are going through a Sigma Kaizen for the first time may be nervous but the emotions vary from excitement to distrust to skepticism. It's usually not until a person experiences the event that they really begin to understand. Nearly everyone who goes through a Sigma Kaizen event is excited at the end of the process and willingly volunteers to be on future improvement projects.

## **How do you involve call center agents in the evaluation process?**

Every Sigma Kaizen team member, including agents, is given some basic training in tools for evaluating a process. Once they are trained they then get the opportunity to apply these tools to their own process or a closely related process. The goal is to identify opportunities for elimination of wasted activities, reducing variation and improving the customer experience.



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**About Guidon Performance Solutions:**

Guidon is a global management consulting organization that helps clients achieve rapid, sustainable improvements in operational performance and growth. Guidon pioneered the combined application of Lean and Six Sigma in the service sector and has a proven track record working with clients in financial services, healthcare, government, retail, technology and other service organizations. With a full-spectrum of capabilities focused on people, process, and technology, Guidon provides strategic direction and hands-on implementation to guide cultural and organizational transformation. Guidon's approach, aligned with client leadership, generates measurable results including revenue growth, cost reduction, productivity improvement, increased customer satisfaction and innovation.