

THIRD PRIZE, THEMED CATEGORY

McGill University



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Quality Starts Here: Changing the Way We Work

To minimize the impact of last-minute staff shortages on service quality when scheduling 80 employees across seven different locations, McGill University used a Lean Six Sigma methodology to streamline work processes. As a result, the absence of any single employee has no direct impact on operations.

The project started by analyzing individual work processes over the course of a week. Workloads were then divided into blocks assigned to five-person teams over a five-day cycle. A Lean approach eliminated waste from processes, allowing employees to assume an 80% workload for every seven-hour shift so they could easily absorb the work of an absent colleague. To rearrange their workloads, teams use management boards that highlight the work needing to be done for a given day, as well as progress status and completion. The boards also help staff address one-off tasks, and signal needs to management.

In 2015, McGill saved \$278,460 by eliminating the need for nine full-time casual employees. By no longer having to reschedule staff, managers saved \$25,000 worth of time that was reinvested into quality improvement projects. The cost of the project: a mere \$800 for the boards.

For further information on this project, please contact:
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