

boston:college 

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL SKILLS NATIONAL PROGRAMME

Boston College Employer Led Meaningful Work Placements
Created by: Tim Reeves

BOSTON COLLEGE: EMPLOYER LED MEANINGFUL WORK PLACEMENTS

ADDING VALUE TO STUDENTS AND EMPLOYERS

Background and Context to the Project.

A brief Explanation of Lean Management Process.

Lean is a customer focused methodology used to continuously improve any process through the elimination of waste in everything you do; it is based on the ideas of “Continuous Incremental Improvement” and “Respect for People.”

There are variants to the process, the one below is tailored to the service industry and the one applied to this project.

- Focus on the customer.
- Identify and understand how the work gets done (the value stream).
- Manage, improve and smooth the process flow.
- Remove Non-Value-Added steps and waste.
- Manage by fact and reduce variation.
- Involve and equip the people in the process.
- Undertake improvement activity in a systematic way.

Education has been transformed through a re-designed curriculum based on LEAN principles. Participants have been upskilled in identifying what outstanding teaching and learning may look like from a student perspective.

This has enabled students to apply their learning and be more independent. They benefit from close links with employers through applied initiatives and work placement opportunities.

Boston College

Boston College is situated close to the town centre of Boston with four campuses in close proximity to each other, as well as a campus in the heart of Spalding in Lincolnshire.

Boston College has been working as a partner College on a AOC Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment project (OTLA) led by Reaseheath College.

Two members of Boston Academic staff participated in LEAN Management training and have completed the Level 5 Lean Management qualification.

Lean Project Specific to Boston College

An outcome of the training required the participants to identify a business improvement activity that would lead to an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning through the concept of lean management.

In recent years the requirements for learners to complete a period of work placement, whilst in full time education, has been a condition of funding. Year on year these conditions have been expanded and made more challenging for colleges and learners to complete.

Previously, at Boston College, work placement was offered to all learners on level 2 courses and higher. Learners on level 1 courses completed an 'internal' work placement within business support areas at the college. The college recognised that these learners should have the same opportunities as other and considered how they would best support these learners to achieve a meaningful period of work experience.

The area for development focused on a Level 1 Business course, where 90% of these learners were non-native speakers. Essentially, for these learners it wasn't about their 'ability' but more about confidence to communicate effectively.

The project focused on developing learner skills early in the course so that they were ready to enter the work environment during the spring term. In addition, alongside these presentations learners have also been developing their interpersonal communication skills to support this transition.

Resources

The resources included are two PowerPoint presentations. These are used in the first term, to introduce to learners, the requirements and expectations for a period of 'meaningful' work experience.

Presentation 1

The first presentation, 'Meaningful Work Place 1', explains the conclusion of a series of meetings held with employers that identifies personal attributes expected of employees by employers. It also provides a structure for learners to help them problem solve and consider important business practices, such as waste management, and viewing the product through the eyes of the consumer, which all embodies the philosophies of lean management processes.

Presentation 2

In the second resource 'meaningful Work Placements 2', it builds on the previous discussion around work placements and the business organisation. Learners are encouraged to research a chosen business, research job specifications and score themselves against the personal

attributes required of the role. Learners are then asked to consider their confidence levels in achieving these requirements or to suggest the level of support they may require in their preparation.

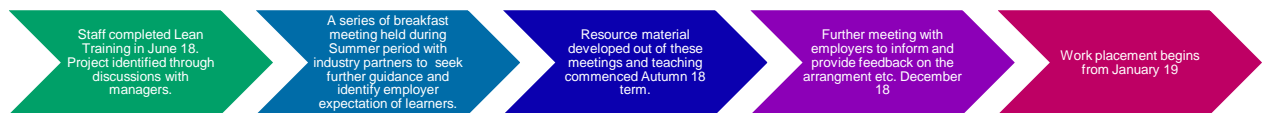
Student Resource

A Learner resource is included which supports the use of presentation 2

LEAN

The LEAN training provided the participants with the tools and approaches to analyse and provide a solution to provide a worthwhile experience for both the employer and the learner. The LEAN training has supported the development of this project as it gave us a clear process for improving systems whether that be in College or in their work placement. It is allowing the learners to understand and put into practice critical analysis which will stay with them for life. Any learner that can improve a system and save a business time or money will be remembered positively and they may even be offered a part time position etc.

Journey from the onset of training of the Lean project.



Reflection

Once we have reflected and reviewed the outcomes of the project, we will be cascaded across the whole curriculum for the academic year of 2019-20. At the end of this process, if we feel there are benefits to be had, we will redevelop the entire work experience process with the Work Placement team to try and build sustainable and responsive work placement links.

The bigger effect of the Lean Management project will be in how we approach apprenticeship delivery. One of our strategic pushes is to increase the numbers of apprenticeships through the college, and also improve our work processes to make this whole provision lean.

Plan, Do, Check, Act

