

SIX SIGMA - ORGANIZATION

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Under a Six Sigma program, the members of an organization are assigned specific roles to play, each with a title. This highly structured format is necessary in order to implement Six Sigma throughout the organization.

There are seven specific responsibilities or "role areas" in a Six Sigma program, which are as follows.

Leadership

A leadership team or council defines the goals and objectives in the Six Sigma process. Just as a corporate leader sets a tone and course to achieve an objective, the Six Sigma council sets the goals to be met by the team. Here is the list of leadership Council Responsibilities:

- Defines the purpose of the Six Sigma program
- Explains how the result is going to benefit the customer
- Sets a schedule for work and interim deadlines
- Develops a mean for review and oversight
- Support team members and defend established positions

Sponsor

Six Sigma sponsors are high-level individuals who understand Six Sigma and are committed to its success. The individual in the sponsor role acts as a problem solver for the ongoing Six Sigma project. Six Sigma is generally led by a full-time, high-level champion, such as an Executive Vice President.

Sponsors are the owners of processes and systems, who help initiate and coordinate Six Sigma improvement activities in their areas of responsibilities.

Implementation Leader

The person responsible for supervising the Six Sigma team effort, who supports the leadership council by ensuring that the work of the team is completed in the desired manner, is the implementation Leader.

Ensuring success of the implementation plan and solving problems as they arise, training as needed, and assisting sponsors in motivating the team are some of the key responsibilities of an implementation leader.

Coach

Coach is a Six Sigma expert or consultant who sets a schedule, defines result of a project, and who mediates conflict, or deals with resistance to the program.

Duties include working as a go-between for sponsor and leadership, scheduling the work of the team, identifying and defining the desired results of the project, mediating disagreements, conflicts, and resistance to the program and identifying success as it occurs.

Team Leader

It is an individual responsible for overseeing the work of the team and for acting as a go-between with the sponsor and the team members.

Responsibilities include communication with the sponsor in defining project goals and rationale, picking and assisting team members and other resources, keeping the project on schedule, and keeping track of steps in the process as they are completed.

Team Member:

An employee who works on a Six Sigma project, given specific duties within a project, and has deadlines to meet in reaching specific project goals.

Team members execute specific Six Sigma assignments and work with other members of the team within a defined project schedule, to reach specifically identified goals.

Process Owner

The individual who takes on responsibility for a process after a Six Sigma team has completed its work.

Extended Definitions of Roles Belt - Colors

The assignment of belt colors to various roles is derived from the obvious source, the martial arts. Based on experience and expertise following roles have evolved over the year.

NOTE : The belt names are a tool for defining levels of expertise and experience. They do not change or replace the organizational roles in the Six Sigma process.

Black Belt

The person possessing this belt has achieved the highest skill level and is an experienced expert in various techniques. As applied to the Six Sigma program, the individual designated as a Black Belt has completed a thorough internal training program and has the experience working on several projects.

The black belt holder is usually given the role of a team leader, the person who is responsible for execution and scheduling.

Master Black Belt

A person who deals with the team or its leadership; but is not a direct member of the team itself. This may be equivalent to the role played by the coach, or for more technical and complex projects.

The Master Black Belt is available to answer procedural questions and to resolve the technical issues that come up.

Green Belt

The Green Belt designation can also belong to the team leader or to a member of the team working directly with the team leader.

A Green Belt is less experienced than a Black Belt but is cast in a key role within the team.