



**K A I Z E N**

*Improving  
the Good*

- Ninja Services
- **KAIZEN Roadmap**
- Questions & Answers

# Ninja Services

*What is it?*



Interdisciplinary Business Excellence.  
10+ years in Asia. Greenfield Experiences.

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## Goals of this presentation

- **Define KAIZEN** by positioning it as a cultural foundation and organizational mindset rather than a collection of tools.
- **Show the business value** of KAIZEN through the benefits presented: Efficiency, quality, engagement, cost reduction and adaptability.
- **Explain the three-phase roadmap** to give a structured view of how improvement capability is built and sustained.
- **Highlight the human factors** - communication, alignment and conflict management - as essential enablers of continuous improvement.
- **Provide a realistic implementation horizon** and illustrate how KAIZEN unfolds over time.
- **Reinforce shared responsibility**, emphasizing that continuous improvement succeeds only when leadership and teams contribute together.



# **KAIZEN**

*What's behind it?*

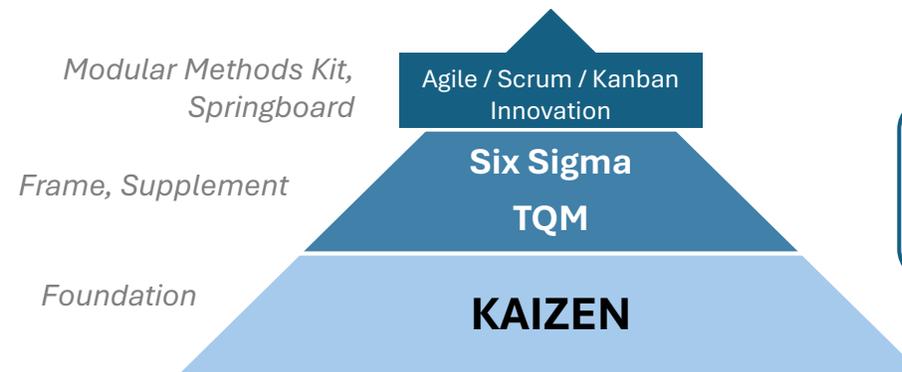
- **KAIZEN in Comparison**
- **KAIZEN Understanding**
- **KAIZEN Maturity Levels**
- **KAIZEN Terms**
- **KAIZEN Principles**

# KAIZEN in Comparison



Approach	Focus	Typical use
<b>KAIZEN</b>	Continuous, incremental improvement; culture and routines	Day-to-day business, shop floor, service processes
<b>Six Sigma</b>	Error reduction, reduce variation; DMAIC, statistics	Quality problems, process distribution, compliance
<b>TQM</b>	Holistic quality orientation, customer focus, standards	Company-wide quality systems
<b>Agile / Scrum / Kanban</b>	Iteration (cycle), self-organization, flow	Product / IT development, service design
<b>Innovation Management</b>	Jump changes, new services/models	R&D, business model innovation, market entry

- **KAIZEN** (Foundation)
  - Continuous improvement (CIP), culture and daily practice
- **Six Sigma** (Supplement)
  - Statistical precision for complex quality problems
- **TQM** (Frame)
  - Formal cover, filled with life by KAIZEN
- **Agile / Scrum / Kanban** (Modular Methods Kit)
  - Speed and iteration (cycle), only effective in KAIZEN culture
- **Innovation Management** (Springboard)
  - Disruptive changes, stabilized by the KAIZEN basis



**KAIZEN** is the foundation of sustainable excellence – without this culture, everything else is just an add-on.

# KAIZEN Understanding



- Level 5** KAIZEN as a living corporate culture
- Level 4** Self-regulation through individual responsibility
- Level 3** Simplify work processes through KAIZEN
- Level 2** Standardization of processes and activities
- Level 1** Order and cleanliness

## Improving the Good!

### Dual Nature

KAIZEN comes from Japan and is an **action plan** and a **philosophy** at the same time.

- As an **action plan**, KAIZEN always aims to focus all activities on improving certain areas.
- As a **philosophy**, KAIZEN is about building and maintaining a culture in which everyone involved actively participates and always proposes and implements improvements.

改



善

«Kai»  
Change

«Zen»  
For the Better

# KAIZEN Maturity Levels



Step	Level	Description	Effect	%
<b>KAIZEN Culture</b> Company DNA	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Preventive KAIZEN</b> Anchoring in corporate culture	Improvements implemented in CHF and h calculated	<b>91–100</b>
<b>KAIZEN System</b> Process orientation	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Pro-active KAIZEN</b> The team optimizes value streams	Improvements implemented in CHF and h estimated	<b>76–90</b>
-----> <i>Tipping Point</i> <-----				
<b>KAIZEN Flow</b> Mindset modification	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Re-active KAIZEN</b> The team improves processes	Improvements implemented in CHF and h estimated	<b>46–75</b>
<b>KAIZEN Flow</b> Value stream orientation	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Re-active KAIZEN</b> The team eliminates waste	Improvements counted implemented	<b>26–45</b>
<b>KAIZEN Select</b> First steps	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Re-active KAIZEN</b> The team implements initial ideas	Improvements counted implemented	<b>0–25</b>

## The KAIZEN Maturity Levels

- The **“tipping point”** in the KAIZEN maturity level is the critical threshold at which an organization makes the leap from “KAIZEN as a method” to “KAIZEN as a system and culture”.
- Many companies get stuck here. They have operational improvements, but no sustainable anchoring.
- In short: The tipping point is the moment when KAIZEN is no longer “done” but is managed and lived.

## The KAIZEN Maturity Level calculation

- To document the status of KAIZEN development and progress, we measure ourselves against the KAIZEN maturity level. This is divided into five levels.
- To calculate the KAIZEN maturity level, we work with four modules. Each of the modules is rated at 25%, giving the KAIZEN maturity level maximum value of 100%.
- This means that the level reached by a team can be determined at the end of the year.

Modules	Weighting	Basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goals</b> (solution methods) -&gt; Number of improvement cards -&gt; Number of workshops (PSS, PM, SIPOC, ASA)</li> </ul>	<b>25%</b>	Tracking list
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dialogue</b> (discussion of topics) -&gt; KAZEN knowledge      -&gt; Improvement card -&gt; Processes &amp; standards -&gt; Goals -&gt; Team board              -&gt; Key figures -&gt; 5S                            -&gt; Method quality</li> </ul>	<b>25%</b>	Third-party or self-evaluation (in consultation with the KAIZEN coach)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5S Audits</b> -&gt; Level of achievement (annual average)</li> </ul>	<b>25%</b>	Overview list of 5S audits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Level of Fulfillment</b> (solution methods) -&gt; Improvement card «trust curve» -&gt; Workshop «trust curve» (PSS, PM, SIPOC, ASA)</li> </ul>	<b>25%</b>	Tracking list
<b>KAIZEN Maturity Level</b>	<b>100%</b>	

# KAIZEN Terms



## Principles & Basics

- **KAIZEN / CIP** → Continuous improvement as a mindset
- **PDCA** → Plan – Do – Check – Act (Deming cycle)
- **80/20 rule (Pareto)** → 80% result with 20% effort
- **Core process** → Value creation, differentiation from the competition
- **Customer (external / internal)** → End users vs internal dependencies



«**MUDA**»  
Waste / Not value-  
generating



«**MURA**»  
Deviation /  
Imbalance



«**MURI**»  
Overloading /  
Oversteering

## Culture & Management

- **Muda / Mura / Muri** → Waste, deviation, overload
- **Gemba / Genchi / Genbutsu** → Place, go, “real thing”
- **Hoshin Kanri** → Strategy implementation through cascade objectives
- **Kaikaku** → Radical improvement
- **Andon** → Visual signal in the event of problems
- **Yokoten** → Horizontal learning (copy, replicate)
- **Obeya** → Visual project / improvement management
- **Nemawashi** → Advance alignment for changes

## Tools & Methods

- **Just-in-time (JIT)** → Demand-driven production
- **KANBAN** → Visual pull system
- **Poka Yoke** → Avoid errors
- **5S** → Order and discipline in the workplace
- **Ishikawa Diagram** → Cause-effect analysis (PSS)
- **SMED** → Setup time reduction
- **Tact time** → Customer tact determines frequency
- **Standardized work** → Best known method as basis

# KAIZEN Principles



A separate and more detailed presentation about the **KAIZEN Principles** is available

# **KAIZEN**

## *The Benefits*

- **Increased efficiency**
- **Enhanced quality**
- **Employee engagement and empowerment**
- **Cost savings**
- **Flexibility and adaptability**

# Benefits of Implementing KAIZEN



- **Increased efficiency:** KAIZEN helps identify and eliminate waste, bottlenecks and non-value-added activities, leading to improved efficiency in processes and operations.
- **Enhanced quality:** By continuously seeking and implementing improvements, KAIZEN drives a culture of quality and excellence, resulting in higher customer satisfaction and reduced defects.
- **Employee engagement and empowerment:** KAIZEN encourages employees at all levels to participate in problem-solving and improvement initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership, empowerment and engagement.
- **Cost savings:** Through KAIZEN, organizations can reduce costs associated with waste, rework, inventory and inefficient processes, leading to improved financial performance.
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** KAIZEN promotes a mindset of adaptability and continuous learning, enabling organizations to respond to changes in the business environment and stay competitive.

# KAIZEN

## *The 3 Phases*

- **Phase 1: Foundation Building (Preparation)**
  - Secure Leadership Commitment
  - Assess and Communicate
  - Educate and Train Employees
  - Define Success Metrics
- **Phase 2: Capability Building (Implementation)**
  - Select Pilot Projects
  - Assemble Cross-functional Teams
  - Execute the KAIZEN Process
- **Phase 3: Continuous Improvement and Evolution (Sustainment)**
  - Standardize Improvements
  - Train and Coach
  - Expand and Communicate
  - Regular Review

# Phase 1: Foundation Building (Preparation)



This initial phase secures the necessary support and education for a continuous improvement culture to come to life and thrive.

- **Secure Leadership Commitment:** Obtain visible sponsorship from executives and ensure management understands and permanently supports the process.
- **Assess and Communicate:** Evaluate the organization's readiness for change and develop a clear communication strategy regarding objectives and expectations.
- **Define Success Metrics:** Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and a baseline to objectively measure the impact of future improvements.
- **Educate and Train Employees:** Provide training on KAIZEN principles, problem-solving methods, and waste identification techniques to empower staff and ensure everyone speaks a common language.

# Phase 2: Capability Building (Implementation)



In this phase, specific projects are executed to build competencies and refine skills using a systematic approach.

- **Select Pilot Projects:** Choose projects with manageable scope, high potential impact, and cross-functional benefits to demonstrate the value of KAIZEN.
- **Assemble Cross-functional Teams:** Create teams that include a mix of process owners, subject matter experts, and an outside perspective to ensure holistic problem-solving.
- **Execute the KAIZEN Process:** Most KAIZEN events or daily activities follow a version of the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle:
  - **Plan:** Identify and analyze the problem define the scope and develop a potential solution.
  - **Do:** Implement the planned actions on a small scale or in the context of a recognized vulnerability (KAIZEN blitz), often within a few days to a week.
  - **Check:** Measure and track the results of the changes against the established baseline and objectives.
  - **Act:** If successful, standardize the improvement as the new standard work; if not, return to the planning phase.

# Phase 3: Continuous Improvement and Evolution (Sustainment)



The final phase focuses on sustaining the gains and embedding KAIZEN into the organizational culture.

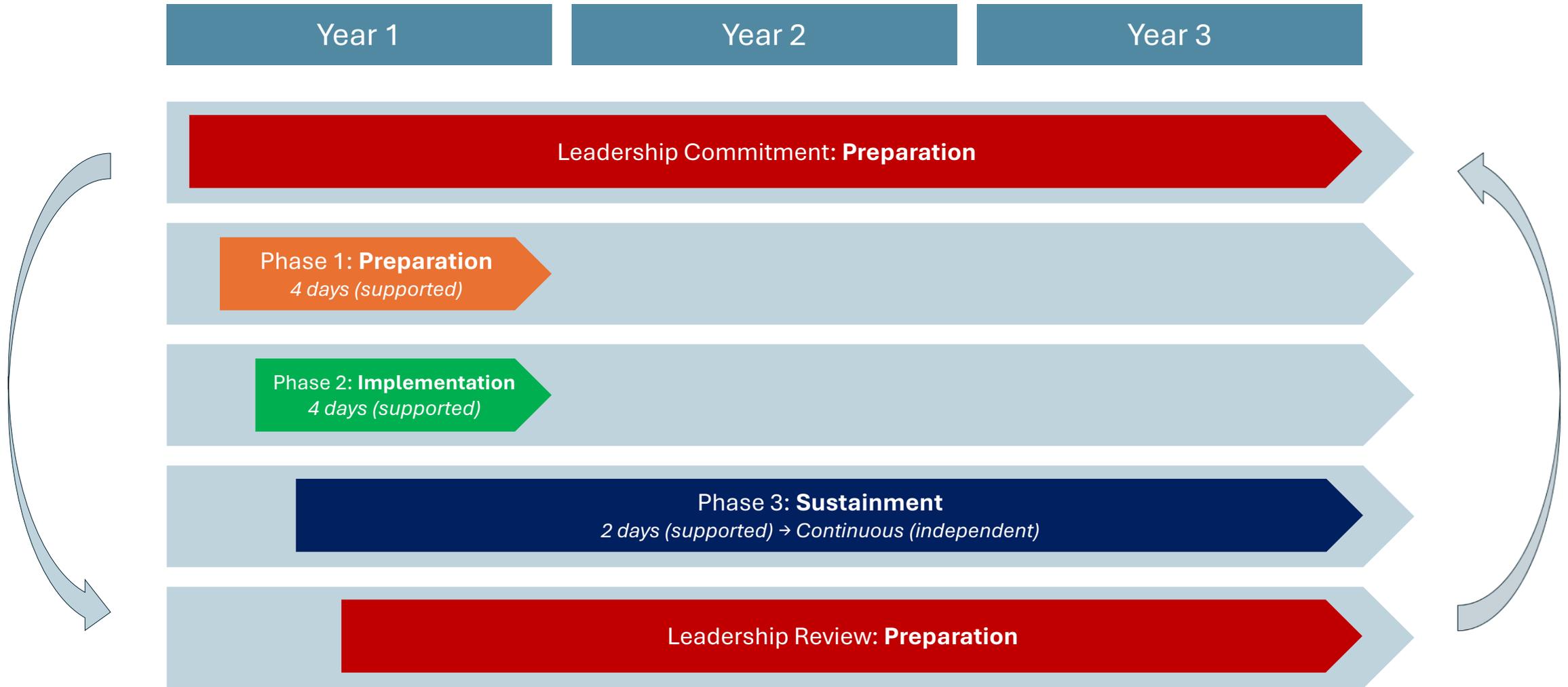
- **Standardize Improvements:** Document and communicate the new standard work procedures (SOPs) to prevent regression to old habits.
- **Train and Coach:** Provide ongoing training and coaching to develop advanced problem-solving capabilities and new improvement habits.
- **Expand and Communicate:** Replicate successful improvements in other areas and widely share success stories throughout the organization to build momentum and engagement.
- **Regular Review:** Continuously assess the KAIZEN program's effectiveness, celebrate successes, and set new, ambitious targets to ensure the cycle of continuous improvement continues indefinitely.

# KAIZEN

*The Roadmap*



# The Roadmap: Rough Planning



# Phase 1: Foundation Building (Preparation)



**Goal:** Establish executive alignment, governance and strategic direction for KAIZEN. Provide KAIZEN trainings for stakeholders / employees.

Step	Days	Objectives	Actions	Outputs	Location
<b>Leadership Commitment</b>	1 day	Align leadership on purpose, scope, and expectations	Define “Why KAIZEN now?” • Agree on 2-3 strategic aims • Set leadership behavior standards • Sign 1-page commitment • Establish Sponsor + Steering	Mandate • Governance • Strategic direction	HQ / Organization-wide
<b>System Diagnosis</b>	½ day	Understand leadership constraints and systemic blockers	Conduct leadership GEMBA • Identify decision bottlenecks • Prioritize improvement themes • Select pilot area	Leadership diagnosis • Top priorities • Pilot focus	Organization-wide / Multi-site / Per site
<b>Steering Setup</b>	½ day	Define how leadership will guide and measure KAIZEN	Leadership standard work • Escalation rules, KAIZEN organization chart • Set KPIs (decision lead time, GEMBA cadence, barriers removed) • Approve dashboard, KAIZEN maturity level	Leadership routines • KPI framework • Steering system	Organization-wide / Multi-site / Per site
<b>KAIZEN Training</b>	2 days	Prepare stakeholders / employees to carry out KAIZEN	Provide training on KAIZEN principles, PDCA, 5S, root cause analysis, standard work • Ensure alignment with leadership expectations	Trained employees • Shared understanding • Readiness for KAIZEN execution	Multi-site / Per site

Total **4 days**

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# Phase 2: Capability Building (Implementation)



**Goal:** Launch pilot projects to build internal KAIZEN capability and deliver visible results.

Step	Days	Objectives	Actions	Outputs	Location
<b>Pilot Selection</b>	½ day	Choose high-impact areas to demonstrate KAIZEN value	Apply selection criteria (impact, feasibility, leadership readiness) • Confirm scope & targets • Assign pilot owner	Pilot list • Defined scope • Ownership assigned	Multi-site / Per site
<b>Team Setup</b>	½ day	Build cross-functional teams to execute KAIZEN	Appoint team leads • Ensure functional coverage • Allocate time & resources • Clarify roles & decision rights	Teams formed • Roles defined • Resources committed	Multi-site / Per site
<b>KAIZEN Execution / Training</b>	2 days <i>(per pilot)</i>	Run structured KAIZEN cycles to solve problems and standardize	Run KAIZEN event • Remove barriers in real time • Validate PDCA discipline • Approve standardization	Implemented improvements • Documented PDCA cycles • Standardized solutions	Multi-site / Per site

Total **4 days**

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# Phase 3: Continuous Improvement and Evolution (Sustainment)



**Goal:** Embed KAIZEN into daily operations and leadership culture for long-term impact.

Step	Days	Objectives	Actions	Outputs	Location
<b>Standardization</b>	½ day	Lock in successful practices as the new baseline	Approve updated standards • Enforce adherence via routines • Monitor stability	Standard work • Stable processes • Best practices documented	Multi-site / Per site
<b>Capability Transfer</b>	½ day	Build internal coaching and problem-solving capacity	Coach leaders & teams • Reinforce PDCA discipline • Ensure knowledge transfer	Coaching routines • PDCA maturity • Capability uplift	Multi-site / Per site
<b>Scaling &amp; Communication</b>	½ day	Expand KAIZEN and reinforce transparency	Select next rollout areas • Communicate success stories • Align cross-functional support	Rollout plan • Broader adoption • Visible wins	Multi-site / Per site
<b>Leadership Review</b>	½ day	Sustain momentum through structured reflection and adjustment	Review KPI trends, KAIZEN maturity level • Adjust routines • Conduct KAIZEN reviews • Reinforce accountability and competence	Sustained performance • Updated leadership system • Continuous improvement cycle	HQ / Organization-wide / Multi-site / Per site

Total **2 days**

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# The Roadmap: Detail Planning



KAIZEN Implementation Calendar											
Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
1		1		1		1		1		1	
2		2		2		2		2		2	
3	HQ	3		3		3		3		3	
4	HQ	4		4		4	HQ	4		4	
5		5		5		5		5		5	
6		6		6		6		6		6	
7	Site 1	Site 3		Site 5		7		7		7	
8	Site 1	Site 3		Site 5		8		8		8	
9		9		9		9		9		9	
10		10		10		10		10		10	
11	Site 1	Site 3		Site 5		11	Site X	11		11	Site X
12	Site 1	Site 3		Site 5		12		12		12	
13		13		13		13		13		13	
14		14		14		14		14		14	
15	Site 1	Site 3		Site 5		15		15		15	
16	Site 1	Site 3		Site 5		16		16		16	
17		17		17		17		17		17	
18		18		18		18		18		18	
19	Site 2	Site 4		Site 6		19		19		19	
20	Site 2	Site 4		Site 6		20		20		20	
21		21		21		21		21		21	
22		22		22		22		22		22	
23	Site 2	Site 4		Site 6		23		23		23	
24	Site 2	Site 4		Site 6		24		24		24	
25		25		25		25		25		25	
26		26		26		26		26		26	
27	Site 2	Site 4		Site 6		27		27		27	
28	Site 2	Site 4		Site 6		28		28		28	
29		29		29		29		29		29	
30		30		30		30		30		30	
31	Sites 1+2	Sites 1-4	Sites 1-6	All Sites							

# KAIZEN *Communication*

- **Communication**
  - **Conflict Management**



# Communication → Conflict Management



## Conflicts are part of further development

Change creates friction. Where transparency increases or working methods change, tensions arise. A professional approach to conflict management is therefore crucial for implementing improvements / transformations in a stable and sustainable way.

## Typical forms of conflict

Type of Conflict	Description
<b>Conflicting goals</b>	Conflicting goals hinder cooperation
<b>Evaluation conflict</b>	Differing opinions, values, and norms lead to disagreement.
<b>Distribution conflict</b>	Dispute over resources such as time, money, tasks
<b>Relationship conflict</b>	Personal hurt, misunderstandings, lack of appreciation
<b>Role conflict</b>	Unclear responsibilities, hidden power struggles
<b>Power struggle</b>	Competitive behavior towards superiors or colleagues
<b>Value conflict</b>	No common ground for viewpoints, moral tensions

## Why are conflicts so difficult?

- Emotional tensions often operate beneath the surface.
- Objective solutions are ineffective when dealing with personal injuries.
- Lack of communication exacerbates the dynamics

## Dealing with conflicts

- Recognize and name conflicts early on
- Treat the causes, not the symptoms.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Use moderation or external support

Communication Share	Description	Influence
Body language	Gestures, mimics, breathing, clothing	> 50%
Voice	Quiet, loud, listless	> 30%
Factual statement	Message content	< 20%
Gestures and facial expressions significantly influence the effect of feedback! → <b>Nonverbal communication = 80%</b>		



« *It's the tone that makes the music* »  
« *What goes around comes around* »



# Questions & Answers

