**Supervisor Development Program**

Continuous Improvement Problem Definition and Why Solve this Now

**Problem Definition and Why Solve this Now**

A well-defined problem is the primary talking point of your Continuous Process Improvement Capstone report out and should be written with clear, concise language. This is a critical step to ensure you are working on a meaningful problem. Being able to clearly articulate the problem and the consequences of not solving the problem (a.k.a. why this problem is important to solve now) confirms to your sponsor, your team, and anyone in the public that may hear about your problem that this Continuous Process Improvement has been around and is not just a one-time occurrence. Use the space below to practice.

A good problem statement:

1. Identifies the problem.
2. Includes supporting facts/data by quantifying or qualifying the problem.
3. Identifies the impact the problem has on the organization.

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| **Aspects of a Good Problem Definition** | **Your Ideas** |
| **Identify the problem you are trying to solve.**  |  |
| **Quantify or qualify the problem.** |  |
| **Impact on the organization.** |  |

**Put it all together.** Make a pitch for your Continuous Process Improvement capstone that clearly defines your problem and why it’s important to solve now.

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| **Your Ideas** | **Good includes**: **Better includes**:  |

Check your problem definition and why change is needed now. Does your problem statement conform?

* **Pain**: I know consequences of not addressing the problem (e.g. wasted staff time, increased turnover, lost funding, equity concerns, etc.).
* **Real**: The problem is not onetime; it has been acknowledged in the past by a number of people.
* **Obvious**: The problem is clear to all who read it, even if they are not familiar with the service.
* **Bound**: I know where the problem with this process begins and ends.

If you can answer the above questions with your problem definition and why solve this now, you are likely ready to proceed with identifying your sponsor and team.