

How British Columbia's Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) Staff Drive Continuous Improvement

<https://civilresolutionbc.ca/crt-staff-drive-continuous-improvement> April 2017

The Civil Resolution Tribunal uses LEAN principles to make our (online) dispute resolution processes as accessible, efficient, and convenient as possible for the public. The following is an edited version of an article by Margaret Gibbs, LEAN Lead with the BC Ministry of Justice. It is reprinted with the author's permission.

The Civil Resolution Tribunal (CRT) is Canada's first online tribunal for resolving strata and small claims disputes. The CRT encourages a collaborative, problem-solving approach to dispute resolution, rather than the traditional courtroom model. The CRT aims to provide timely access to justice, built around your life and your needs. It does this by providing legal information, self-help tools, and dispute resolution services to help solve your problem, as early as possible.



The problem...

As with many new programs or processes, initially change is rapid. As processes and procedures are becoming established, there are many edits, changes and additions to the way things are done. Gaps in procedures may be noticed, and need to be captured and actioned. Additionally, keeping the team informed of the rapid changes, as well as capturing those changes into procedure guides and other staff manuals can be quite daunting as staff are focussed on providing the best service they can in an emerging service area. Anticipating that theirs would be a rapidly changing arena, at least in the short run, the

Resolution Support Clerks were trained by Lean BC on how to use a huddle board to capture ideas that would otherwise be lost in the flurry of activity of day-to-day work.

The Huddle Board solution...

Using a simple post-it type pad, staff captured on separate pages all the issues and problems that arose in the course of their work at the CRT call centre. Individual items were posted on the Huddle Board and discussed at short (less than 15 minutes) stand up meetings or “huddles”. Through the board, individual issues were assigned to staff for action, timelines given for follow up, and they were moved into the “Doing” part of the board as capacity on the team allowed. Quick follow-up huddle meetings tracked the progress on “to do” items, and celebrated the success of staff when items were completed.

The Huddle Board became a visual reminder of tasks in progress, actions to be taken, and areas where the team needed to seek assistance or manage items up the chain. The tool was so successful, that the team has created a “success wall” to show just how much continuous improvement they have managed in a few short months.

What the CRT Team said about the new tool...

“Our LEAN huddle board is a great way to not only identify and implement effective procedures, but also to manage the sheer number of changes and adaptations the CRT is going through. As a new government service focused on client service we have the flexibility and the mandate to adapt our processes to the client’s needs.”



“Managers and directors at the CRT value our input in defining, measuring, analysing, improving and controlling processes. We’re in a

constant state of transformation! It's refreshing and empowering to know we are making a difference."

"We here at the CRT have a real opportunity to see LEAN in action – as we are building the program, we are constantly evaluating and revisiting the effectiveness of our processes. As a brand new program, we aren't bogged down by the "That's the way we've always done it" thinking – we ask the question "Why do we do things this way?" and "Is there a better way to do this?". If there is, we aren't afraid to change our processes to become more Lean. And we do it every day."

"By putting our ideas through the LEAN process we get a chance to run ideas by the whole team before sending off a change request form. This means we present an idea that has already been reviewed and improved at a lower level. We get to identify any opportunities for improvement at the same time we review the idea as a team, and identify which stream it needs to be in; does it need a change request form completed and submitted to executive, or does it fall in to the "just do it" category where we can implement the change ourselves and see immediate improvement."

"I find that the morale in our Organization is very upbeat and positive and I find the Huddle Board and our CRT Lean Success Board to be a large part of that. When we see the amount of problems we've faced and overcome it gives us all a sense of accomplishment and verifies to us that we are an essential part of the creation and continued improvement of something that will be beneficial to both the Government and the people of BC that we serve."