



# Leaning Forward

The Official Newsletter of Lean and Innovative Thinking for the City of Baltimore

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Editor: Amy Costanzo

## Highlights

- Update on Lean training and events
- Overview of the City's latest Lean events, the Liquor Board inspection process and the bankruptcy research process
- A look at the City's video camera accident reduction plan project
- Lean training class descriptions and dates
- New GGBC selection
- A light bulb thought from Jenn Fusion

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## Baltimore's Lean Initiative Continues to Thrive

As the City enters FY2016, its Lean initiative, Baltimore L.I.F.T. (Lean, Innovation, and Forward Thinking) continues to grow and gain momentum. From January to April, more than 150 City employees received beginner Lean training and covered the basic principles and applications of Lean Government at work. Additionally, the first intermediate training course was held with 13 City employees participating. Part of the intermediate training includes completion of a Lean project with a participant's office. In late May, the participants will convene again to share the results of their projects, what they learned as they implemented Lean, and what they plan to do to keep Lean momentum going and expand Lean to other areas of their work. Another series of beginner trainings is planned throughout the summer, including two more intermediate classes in June and July. A schedule of training dates can be found on page 4

Several more Lean events have also taken place with more scheduled. In March, the Liquor Board inspection process, featured on page 2, was examined through the Lean process. The bankruptcy research process within the Bureau of Revenue Collections, featured on page 3, went through Lean process in April. Both events were very successful and resulted in improvements that will undoubtedly aid City employees in their work. A Lean event for the Health department examining the routing of grant-funded contracts is planned for July.

In addition to more training dates and events, Baltimore L.I.F.T. is planning a lunch speaker series with Lean professionals from surrounding jurisdictions. Invitees will have the opportunity to speak about their Lean experiences, challenges, and lessons learned with City employees. Dates and speakers for this event will be confirmed in the next several months.

Lean is not the only exciting thing happening—Innovation Fund applications for FY2016 projects have started to be received and in the next several weeks, they will be reviewed for viability. This month's Innovative Spotlight on page 5 features the Fire Department's video camera accident reduction program, which is currently being implemented and already seeing results.

# Increasing Efficiency: A Closer Look at the Liquor Board Inspection Process

The City's Liquor Board inspection process is the process by which venues that sell alcohol—liquors stores, bars, restaurants, and other facilities—are inspected to ensure that they are in compliance with State and City laws concerning the sale of alcohol to the public. The process was fraught with inefficiency and inspector dissatisfaction. The Liquor Board inspectors indicated that often, licensees did not know what was required of them in order for an inspection to be done, that inspectors regularly received tickets from police and parking attendants with the Department of Transportation (DOT) while they were conducting inspections on site, that many 311 complaints were being improperly routed to the Liquor Board, and that they wasted time following up with individuals who needed to have a summons delivered to them, but were not physically present to receive it.

In March 2015, staff from the Liquor Board and MOIT gathered in the Innovation Lab for four days to examine and “lean” the Liquor Board inspection process. The event was facilitated by Jeff Fuchs of Neovista Consulting. Prior to the event, the participants had attended four hours of Lean beginner training provided by the City. Once the event began, the team quickly addressed issues such as inspector safety, ticketing of their private vehicles during inspections (the Liquor Board does not own fleet vehicles), and the schedule the inspectors were required to work as their top concerns. While the scope of the event did not include a discussion of the inspectors obtaining fleet vehicles or weapons, adjustments in inspector schedules were discussed. Three new shifts were implemented and the day shift is now 11am-7pm, which better meets the needs of management and staff.

The inspectors also stated that when they were conducting annual inspections, the licensees often did not know what documents they had to have ready for the inspectors to examine. This led to inspectors losing time while waiting to licensees to gather the proper materials. A proposed solution to this was to hold a new licensee orientation in the fall to inform all new licensees what an inspection was like, to make clear what documents they needed to have ready when an inspector came to their establishment, and to answer any questions about the inspection process. Along these lines, the Liquor Board plans to establish a checklist so that all inspectors can know exactly what they should be looking for in an inspection to avoid overlooking an important inspection requirement. One of the most serious issues the inspectors raised during the event was how they were treated by the parking enforcement branch of DOT. Unlike many other City agencies, the Liquor Board



does not have a fleet of vehicles for inspectors to use during their inspections; the inspector must drive their personal vehicles to and from establishments while conducting inspections. Inspectors were routinely receiving tickets from DOT and the police, despite the display of a parking placard that they placed on the dashboard of their vehicles. To remedy this, the budget office wrote a memo to the director of DOT and the Police Commissioner requesting that Liquor Board inspectors' vehicles no longer be ticketed while the inspectors were performing their duties.

Other improvements included establishing a policies on what constitutes follow-up inspections and a new method of summons delivery, changing the criteria in the 311 online request form so that Liquor Board inspectors are not responding to incidents over which they have no authority, and the Liquor Board working with other agencies to establish better working relationships with other agencies. In May, the Liquor Board Lean team will meet to provide an update on the implementation of the solutions they developed.

See the fire permit inspection process report out video on BBMR's website at:  
<http://bbmr.baltimorecity.gov/LeanGovernment/LeanEvents>

# Meeting the Challenge: Leaning the Bankruptcy Research Process

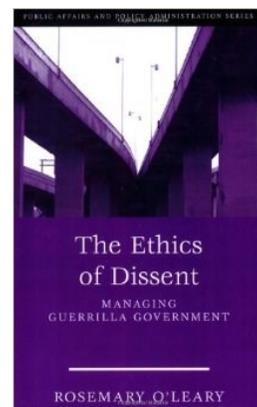
The Bureau of Revenue Collections (BRC), a division of the Department of finance, is tasked with collecting all revenue that is owed to the City of Baltimore. BRC was receiving more than 3,000 bankruptcy filings monthly from people who owed the City money for various reasons. In the case of parking citations, the research process was very time consuming—it was taking BRC staff hours and hours each day to conduct research in order to determine that someone who had filed for bankruptcy would not have their vehicle towed or booted for non-payment of parking tickets and fines. This was taking away time from other important tasks.

From April 7th-10th, eleven staff members from BRC gathered in the Innovation Lab for four days to examine and “lean” the Liquor Board inspection process. The event was facilitated by Matt Beakes and John DeCaro of Operational Performance Solutions, Inc. Prior to the event, the participants had attended four hours of Lean beginner training provided by the City. BRC staff identified a need for Parking Authority of Baltimore City (PABC) personnel to have access to the bankruptcy system so that they could also see who had filed for bankruptcy. They also identified the need for the existing backlog—over 6,000 cases—to be handled as quickly as possible, for there to be one person designated to input a vehicle’s tag number into the bankruptcy system, to develop a script for the City’s call center to handle all calls related to bankruptcy, and to set up an email box to receive correspondence from courts regarding bankruptcy proceedings.

Other solutions to the challenges BRC was facing included:

- Storing more files electronically
- Issuing one letter concerning parking matters to individuals with multiple citations
- Sorting bankruptcy cases with parking issues at the beginning of the process rather than throughout the process
- Developing an error-proof excel spreadsheet to calculate interest & penalties for taxes, water and citations and keep a running tab of balance due

BBMR will monitor BRC’s progress in implementing these improvements.



Our next Good Government Book Club selection is *The Ethics of Dissent* by Rosemary O'Leary. This book explores the concept of “guerilla government”, a phenomenon where employees intentionally go against the mission or directives of a public organization because of tensions between bureaucracy and democracy. The book uses three case studies – the Nevada wetlands, the Seattle EPA office, and the Hoosier National Forest – as examples of guerilla government in practice and how dissent can be managed constructively. performance in the workplace. Please join us on Wednesday, June 10th at 12pm in the Innovation Lab (located at 201 East Baltimore Street on the 2nd Floor—HR Training Division) for a discussion about the book.

Dessert will be served! If you have any questions, please contact Amy Costanzo at [amy.costanzo@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:amy.costanzo@baltimorecity.gov)

Upcoming  
Events

- Lean Beginner Training: 5/13, 5/26, 6/15, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27
- Good Government Book Club Meeting: 6/10
- Lean Intermediate Training: 5/11-5/12, 6/24-6/25
- Health Dept. Lean event: 7/14-7/17



# Upcoming Lean Training

**Baltimore L.I.F.T. is pleased to announce several more Lean training sessions coming up! Training is open and free to all City employees!**

Beginner (4 hours)—includes an overview of Lean philosophy, strategies, and examples of practical applications.

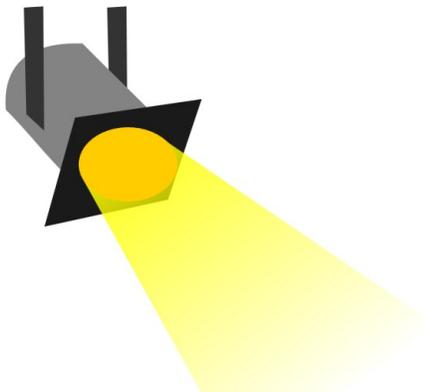
Dates: 5/13, 5/26, 6/15, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27

Intermediate (16 hours)— includes a more in depth look at Lean tools. Participants will be required to complete a Lean project within their workplace and report on results to the group six weeks later. Completion of beginner training is required.

Dates: 5/11 and 5/12, 6/24 and 6/25

Advanced (32 hours) - includes preparation to become a Lean certified facilitator. Participants will co-facilitate several Lean events. Completion of beginner and intermediate training is required and students will be selected by application.

Dates: TBD

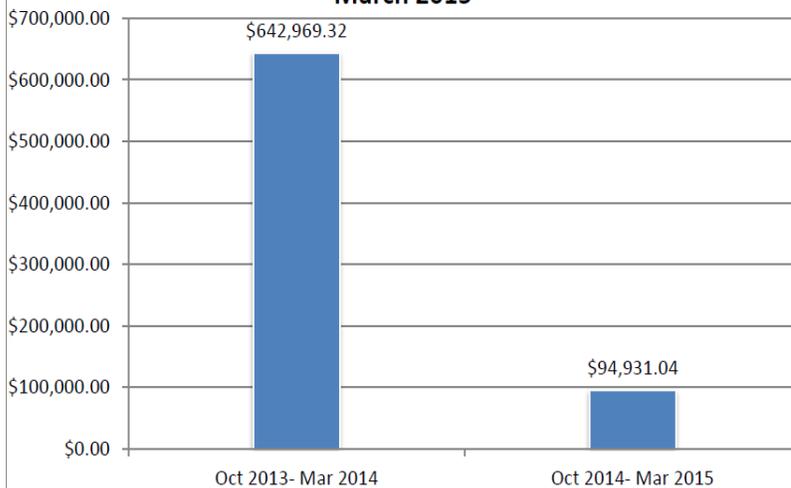


## Innovation Spotlight: Video Camera Accident Reduction Plan

In FY2014, the Baltimore City Fire Department was awarded \$400,000 to install dashboard cameras on 150 fire engines, trucks, and ambulances. The purpose of the program is to decrease the frequency of accidents involving BCFD vehicles occurred, thereby decreasing the costs spent on repairs. The cameras are now fully installed and members of the BCFD who are taped engaging in risky driving behaviors are receiving coaching

to help them change their driving practices. The early results have been dramatic; the number of incidents in October 2014 was 700 and as of February 2015, the number of incidents had decreased to 413. Additionally, the costs for BCFD vehicle collisions has decreased substantially. From October 2013 to March 2014, the costs for vehicles repairs was just under \$643,000. From October 2014 to March 2015, the cost for vehicle repairs was just under \$95,000—an 86% decrease (see graph on left). The cameras have not had an impact on response times. The first expected repayment to the Innovation Fund will occur at the end of FY2015.

**Cost of BCFD Vehicle Collisions: October 2014 - March 2015**





# Light Bulb Thought



Each issue of Leaning Forward will contain a Light Bulb Thought—something to provoke thinking along the line of innovating, improving, and progressing. This issue's Light Bulb Thought is adapted from "How To Change the Culture of the Workplace" by Jenn Fusion, a writer for the Houston Chronicle.

## **Step 1**

Identify and attack the root problems in the existing corporate culture. Are the problems related to personnel? Technology? Policies? Communication? Brainstorming with top-level executives helps uncover impediments to productivity. However, you should also arrange a meeting with select employees to find out your staff's perception. Another approach may be to set up an anonymous "suggestion box," which invites comments that employees may be hesitant to bring up in person. If you prefer, you may send out an email survey that asks for feedback on improving performance and satisfaction levels in the workplace. Remember, a happy staff is a productive staff.

## **Step 2**

Get people to come to your side. Understand there are many obstacles to change in the workplace. In their book "Blue Ocean Strategy," W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne say that people experience cognitive difficulty in understanding why change is necessary. Address this issue by explaining the dangers of inaction. Limited resources, institutional politics and motivation are other obstacles faced by management looking to shake up the company. Needless to say, you can't convert everyone at once, so begin with people who have the greatest influence over the organization. They will be your biggest enforcers and allies.

## **Step 3**

Start the change with management. There is a trickle-down theory that exists in organizational culture. When management changes their ways, they develop respect and camaraderie with their staff members. Workers like to see managers who are unafraid to roll up their sleeves and do the dirty work. They like managers who listen to their concerns, ask them how their day is going and encourage continual feedback. They like seeing opportunities to advance, train for a new position or receive performance bonuses. Management can offer new ways of showing their gratitude and appreciation for the workhorses of the company.

## **Step 4**

Jazz up the environment for the common worker. If you want to stimulate creativity, productivity and retention in the workplace, re-evaluate your personnel structure. Look for employees' unique strengths and consider creating new opportunities, work groups or task forces that make use of their strengths. Schedule training sessions or allow workers to switch their jobs occasionally to acquire new skill sets. In addition to making the work environment more exciting, consider how you can change the physical look of the office. Add plants to the cubicles or video games to the break-room. Encourage employees with a new egalitarian culture where there is scheduling flexibility, competitive bonus structures and interdisciplinary project teams.

## **Step 5**

Provide incentives for change. Individuals must know that the changes proposed will benefit them in some way. Include rewards for compliance. Commiserate with your workers by saying, "I know it will be challenging to learn the new system, but if we meet our goals, there will be something in it for you." Consider planning an all-expenses-paid company picnic to show your appreciation. Create contests that drive performance levels through the roof. For example, one call center decided on a new compensation plan that cut base pay by \$1 per hour—which, in turn, afforded a monthly contest to win a new car.