

Recently, DesignFacilitator had the opportunity to discuss the Client Feedback Tool with KLMK Group, a leading provider of innovative healthcare facility solutions. They are utilizing the Tool to evaluate both employee and client satisfaction.

KLMK Group is continually evaluating opportunities to improve the capital facility process, and subscribes to the principles of LEAN construction. LEAN is a production management-based approach to project delivery -- as used in the AEC industry, it is a new way to design and build capital facilities. We asked KLMK if they felt that the Client Feedback Tool would add value to the LEAN construction process. According to Tim McCurley, Senior Consultant managing the Owensboro Medical Health System project, the system would have been beneficial early on in the process when design meetings were frequent. "Continuous feedback is a very LEAN exercise. We try to always fix the processes we use," says McCurley. "We gather feedback at meetings with the Plus Delta technique, but the Client Feedback Tool would have helped us gather feedback at other times in a way that is efficient, focused, and that helps eliminate waste."

The Client Feedback Tool helps team members and clients become more honest and accountable. Because feedback is tracked by requester and responder, everyone can access and use the data. With some project teams involving over a hundred members, it's critical to assure that the whole process is working for individuals and also firm wide. The tool makes collecting feedback in complex groups efficient and is designed to be used by everyone on the team. Architects, engineers, contractors, owner representatives, and all other project participants each provide services to "clients," and can apply feedback as part of the LEAN project delivery.

"Feedback certainly works. My job responsibility is to assure the team is doing what they are supposed to be doing. Instead of having to track them down, make phone calls, and figure out how the project stands, the Client Feedback Tool could gather all this information so efficiently," McCurley shares. "Otherwise, we would have to wait for some meeting or milestone to discover ways to improve." With the Client Feedback Tool, teams don't have to silo their knowledge; they can apply their feedback to improve the whole team.

Rather than sharing an idea for improvement, then chasing loose ends to assure the changes happened, the Client Feedback Tool's built-in capabilities allow firms to track follow-up and confirm if the new process is actually working. McCurley states "It would be a great way to make sure something actually happens." Without some system to track results, follow-up, and measure change in behavior, asking for feedback can be a frustrating exercise. One key lean principle, championed by LEAN guru and industry expert Hal Macomber, stresses the importance of "tightly coupling learning with action." Without action, those providing feedback lose trust in the process. The Client Feedback Tool is designed specifically to enhance project value and success for the people giving feedback.

Today's new economy demands every project deliver maximum value to the client and to each other project participant. Innovative strategies like LEAN construction and continuous feedback help firms capitalize on every available opportunity to deliver high quality, high-value solutions.

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