



APPLICATION GUIDE – MARCH 2017

Creating a Culture of Continual Improvement, Part 1

BOTTOM LINE:

Improvement can be a catalyst for creating momentum.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The essential ingredients to momentum are: *new*, *improved* and *improving*. Continual improvement is essential to sustained momentum.
- Organizations with a culture of continual improvement do two things intuitively and simultaneously:
 - They evaluate everything they are doing.
 - They are quick to incorporate things others are doing.
- The organization, in addition to the leader, must be committed to continual improvement.
- There are six steps for creating any kind of culture within your organization or department:
 - **Name It** – Define and label the culture.
 - **Brand It** – Create a memorable, conversational slogan or mantra for your culture.
 - **Wear It** – Be seen doing it. Culture is shaped primarily by how leaders behave, not believe.
 - **Teach It** – Intentionally and consistently teach the culture.
 - **Institutionalize It** – Create organizational habits around how you want to characterize the culture.
 - **Recognize It** – When you see something that exemplifies the culture you are trying to create, recognize it.
- Next month we will talk about how to specifically apply these steps to create a culture of continual improvement.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION:

1. Can you define the culture of your organization? Do you believe it has been created or inherited?
2. Which of the six steps for creating culture listed above does your organization do well? Where can it improve?