In April 2008, The Joint Commission embarked on a long term, enterprise-wide initiative to dramatically improve the efficiency of its internal operations, increase customer satisfaction, and increase the quality of its products and services. Our work and culture have been transformed through the adoption of process improvement tools and methods such as Lean Six Sigma, Work Out, and change management. We call this Robust Process Improvement® or RPI®.

- Lean looks to remove waste and increase speed.
- Six Sigma looks to reduce defects and variation in a process and improves quality.
- Change Management is a set of actions, supported by a tool set, used to prepare people to seek, commit to, and accept change. Facilitating Change® is The Joint Commission’s change management methodology. It is based on shared experiences and learning gained from using RPI to facilitate employees’ ability to improve processes by engaging them in managing and directing the constant change inherent in a dynamic business environment.

RPI training and staff
- Key components of RPI include building the expertise of staff and leadership and embedding the tools and methods into the work we do every day.
- Teams of Green Belts and Change Agents are trained to lead process improvement projects throughout the organization.
- Through the Yellow Belt curriculum, staff are trained in the foundational principles of RPI to empower them to use RPI to solve the problems they face. Staff who complete all RPI Yellow Belt courses and demonstrate use of RPI skills achieve Yellow Belt certification.
- The RPI team at The Joint Commission is composed of RPI Master Black Belts, Black Belts, and Master Change Agents, many of whom were trained and certified within The Joint Commission. The RPI team trains, mentors and certifies staff on the application of RPI tools and methods as well as leading enterprise improvement projects. Employees can be certified as Change Agents, Yellow Belts, Green Belts and Black Belts. In addition, Joint Commission executives to provide help on identifying areas of improvement within their organization.
- The Joint Commission’s goal is to have all enterprise employees trained in some form of RPI. Since the program began, The Joint Commission has trained 170+ Green Belts, 220+ Change Agents, and certified over 1,200 Yellow Belts. Currently, 92 percent of active employees have been trained in RPI.

Cultural Transformation
Today, hundreds of RPI-trained staff have transformed – and continue to transform – the way we work within our organization and the way we interact with the healthcare field. Our success with RPI is a model for health care and every organization that is committed to patient safety and quality care for all.

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