

Roles and Responsibilities in Six Sigma Projects

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Six Sigma – regardless of whether “classical” or lean - has become one of the most important strategies for process improvement. Green Belts and Black Belts bear the brunt of project work. Becoming a Green or Black Belt requires challenging training. Moreover, in order to make the work of Green and Black Belts successful, the entire organization must be geared to the application of these methods, you need to assign the respective roles and responsibilities to specific persons and they have to assume their roles in a qualified way.

The roles and responsibilities in implementing a Six Sigma project are explained in the following. They also apply to Lean Six Sigma and Design for Six Sigma.

The Leader is in charge of defining visions, motivating employees to participate in Six Sigma projects, setting the stage for success, implementing the requirements demanded for success, evaluating the results and effecting the required changes.

Compared to the Leader, the Champion is responsible for one or several Six Sigma projects. Champions are usually experienced executives being well-acquainted with Six Sigma and convinced that this initiative is going to be successful. They ensure the success of this initiative and the corresponding project tasks by checking progress of the project at regular intervals. Moreover, Champions always communicate with the Leader.

Master Black Belts are responsible for the training of Black and Green Belts and offer them methodological support. They have profound knowledge of the required statistical methods and techniques. All of them must have management experience in a company, organization, etc. The main task of Black Belts is finding solutions immediately and managing development projects. As team leaders of the Green Belts and project teams they also manage their work.

Experts in the respective subject area of the project and Green Belts are usually the members of the project teams. Green Belts support Black Belts in realizing projects or they are even Six Sigma project managers at the lower process level. They manage the respective Six Sigma project from the concept to its conclusion. During this time Black Belts or Master Black Belts guide them.

Yellow Belts are employees having basic knowledge of Six Sigma methods and applying them every day to improve processes; however, not within the scope of Six Sigma projects. They sometimes participate in Six Sigma projects but only as team members under the direction of Black or Green Belts.

Position	Tasks
Executive Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop visions • Establish direction • Support Integration of Six Sigma into corporate culture • Convince and motivate managerial staff • Assess results • Lead the change
Six Sigma Sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on behalf of Executive Leadership • Introduce Six Sigma across the organization • Coordinate, promote, motivate, prepare results
Champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for the project • Carry out project reviews • Implement results • Mentor Black Belts
Master Black Belts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time • Train Black Belts and Green Belts and guide them in the methodology • Method specialist
Black Belts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 % to 100 % of working hours • Responsible for the execution of the project • Lead the Six Sigma team • Train and guide Green Belts and team members
Green Belts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time • Work with the Six Sigma team, guided by the Black Belts • Realize own projects at process level
Yellow Belts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time ("48h projects") • Work with the Six Sigma team, guided by Green Belts
Project Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time • Execute individual tasks
All Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand Six Sigma strategy • Adopt and apply method