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KaiNexus

An Introduction to

KaiNexus Continuous Improvement Software

Start. Spread. Sustain Improvement.

Introduction

An improvement culture stands on three pillars: leadership, methodology, and technology. In this eBook, you will learn about the relationship between these three elements, and see how continuous improvement software facilitates the leadership and methodology you need to start, spread, and sustain your improvement culture.

Maybe you're in the middle of implementing Lean, the Toyota Production System (TPS), Kaizen, Kanban, or Six Sigma. Maybe you've been reading about the incredible success of companies like St. Clair Hospital, Qorvo, and J.C. Cannistraro in implementing continuous improvement and you're ready to get started. No matter what led you here, or where you are in your journey, it is likely that at some point you will struggle with managing and monitoring organization-wide improvement efforts.
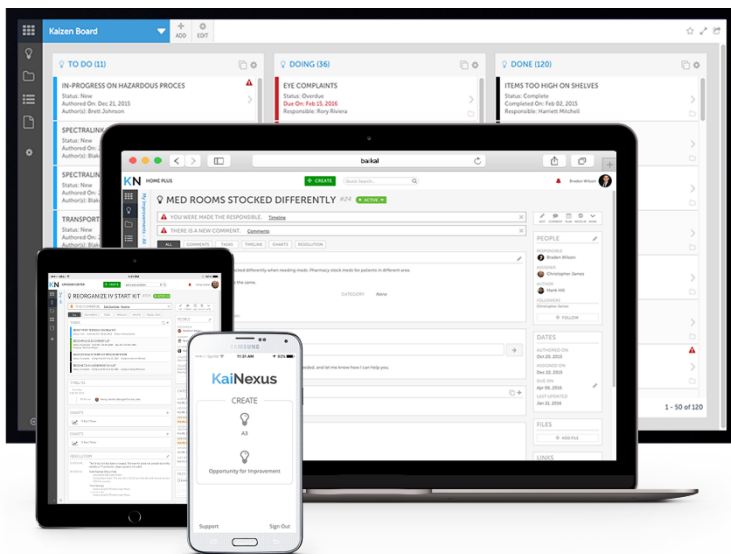
Please note, if you're reading this book, it's assumed you already know a bit about the continuous improvement process, and how it has the power to completely transform your organization for the better, in ways that you might not even anticipate yet. If you are not informed about the theory of continuous improvement please revisit our website and click learn for a list of resources to get started.

In this quick and practical eBook, you'll learn how to build and maintain continuous improvement culture, how improvement software can help you manage and monitor your improvement efforts and spread culture, and how to choose a software solution for continuous improvement.

Let's get started!

The 3 Pillars of a Successful Improvement Culture

The foundation of continuous improvement is a cycle of capturing opportunities for improvement, implementing them, measuring the impact, and sharing knowledge. With time and dedication, that cycle becomes self-sustaining as success inspires greater engagement, and a culture of continuous improvement spreads throughout an organization touching every process.

The cycle of capturing opportunities, implementing them, measuring them and sharing them is built upon three critical elements: engaged leadership, a consistent improvement methodology, and enabling technology.

Every single organization that has come to us struggling with establishing or maintaining an improvement culture is failing to nurture at least one of these three components, for one reason or another. Leadership, methodology, and technology support each other in an intricate, codependent dance that has been mastered by the best continuous improvement organizations.

Behaviors That Spread an Improvement Culture:

1. Explain why improvement matters
2. Empower, but be a servant leader
3. Set goals, not quotas
4. Ask for Ideas
5. Emphasize small ideas
6. Ask for more than just cost savings
7. Blame the process, not the people
8. Respond quickly to every idea
9. Help people see the bigger picture
10. Turn complaints into ideas

Leadership

Continuous improvement experts agree the support of leadership is the key factor in the success of a continuous improvement program in an organization.

This makes perfect sense, if an executive or a manager doesn't feel it's important, employees, who feel pressure to make themselves appear valuable to those leaders, will eventually lose interest as well.

Apathy will also spread if leaders don't demonstrate they are behind the initiative by offering guidance and support within the organization to make change. If there is a lack of support for a continuous improvement program to be implemented, those implementing it will only be able to work on a series of isolated efforts.

Since we know leadership behaviors will make or break an improvement culture, the question becomes, how do we empower leaders to engage and support employees without demanding more of their already overburdened time?

The answer is simple, a reliable methodology and the right technology.

Methodology

Establishing a methodology gives leaders a common language and procedure to empower, engage, and support employees in the process of improvement. This in turn accelerates improvement, engages more people, and maximizes impact on improvement efforts across the board.

At KaiNexus, we are often asked how an organization will know when it is the right time to implement a continuous improvement methodology. The answer is always clear no matter what type or size of organization asks; the right time is now.

This often spurs a storm of "but" statements, which also always get the same response; there's never going to be a perfect time to start, you just should be willing to try.

A desire to engage employees and colleagues in continuous improvement is the critical first step, and you don't have to wait to take it until you have your entire journey mapped out. The truth is that no person or organization is an expert in continuous improvement when they get started, they just act and are willing to continue working toward their goals, gaining experience and mastery along the way with every success and failure.

Continuous improvement is a skill that you develop through practice using just your commitment to the process and the knowledge of the existing methodologies that you gain slowly along the way.

If you think you have more to do before choosing a methodology and getting started, or that your existing culture of improvement isn't strong enough to support implementation, you should reconsider. We never hear from those who have implemented a continuous improvement strategy that they wish they would have waited longer before getting started. However, we often hear leaders tell us that they wish they had started sooner.

Your Improvement Methodology Needs 3 Things:
Simplicity

Simplicity in implementation of your chosen strategy is key for employee buy in. By establishing a methodology that is simple enough for everyone to participate, you eliminate barriers to engagement. Put another way, if it's too hard to participate, no one will.

Consistency

Consistency in expectations, goals, and processes ensures that everyone is speaking the same language for a unified improvement culture, which in turn increases collaboration and the potential for improvements to be made.

Discipline

Ensuring that improvement is an important part of everyone's daily work is vital to growing an improvement culture. It also ensures that opportunities to improve every task, done every day will be captured.

KaiNexus has given us a vision of what's going on across our organization that we've never had before. This transparency brings more opportunities for improvement, more work that we could be doing, more coaching that we could be doing.

It takes a lot of the burden off the manager and increases communication and transparency across the organization so that everyone can see what's being worked on and the manager doesn't have to carry all that.

- Tania Lyon | Director of Operational Performance Improvement | St. Clair Hospital

Technology

Technology is what enables leadership to engage in the improvement process, and it's what enables them to provide a simple, consistent, and disciplined improvement methodology without adding to their workload. When it is built to support and maintain continuous improvement, technology empowers employees to log ideas and issues, which in turn lifts the burden of improvement off managers while increasing transparency and communication with staff at all levels.

By being able to both access information and offer support and guidance in one location, leaders can easily become engaged in the improvement process, at the same time fostering an understanding of how each improvement contributes to organizational goals, and addressing areas of concern immediately before they lead to wasted resources.

Giving your team a single place to go for all their improvement information, and therefore a single method for logging information, makes sure files are organized, easy to find, and up to date. This all helps simplify processes for both managers and staff.

Innovation and improvement management software that is simple enough for every employee to use will help any organization to create and sustain a culture of continuous improvement, if it's powerful enough to offer real value to leaders and improvement specialists. Such management platforms facilitate transparency, accountability, and collaboration.

Even the act of deploying improvement software demonstrates to employees a commitment to the improvement methodology, by providing a platform built specifically to support it, which in turn kicks an organization's improvement culture into high gear.

See how this Practice Leader, Continuous Improvement feels about rolling KaiNexus out to his staff.

Watch Now

Importantly, the right technology will help drive improvement from every direction. From the top-down, projects that are critical to reach organizational goals can be initiated by leadership. In this way, improvement software provides structure and visibility for strategic alignment. From the bottom-up, daily improvements initiated by staff are a key element of a healthy culture. In this way, technology unites your organization with technology to start, spread, and sustain improvement.

Top-Down Improvement

Strategy Deployment

Bottom-Up Improvement

Continuous Improvement Software
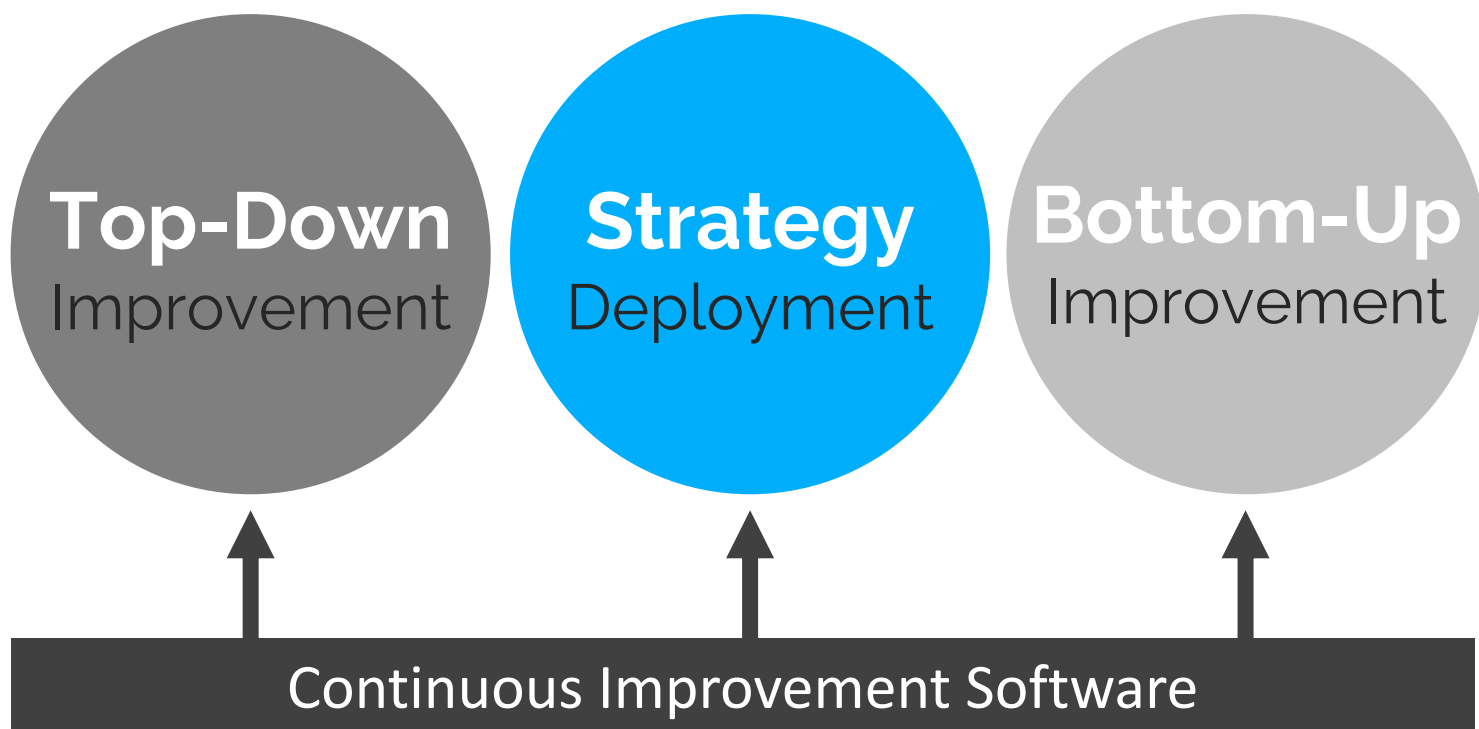
Continuous Improvement Software Provides:

1. Improved Communication

2. Increased Visibility

3. Impact Reporting

4. Greater Employee Engagement

The right software platform makes it easy for people at all levels of your organization to see and participate in continuous improvement, regardless of where or when they work. Getting started managing your work in such a platform from the beginning will provide you with a solid foundation to build on as your culture of improvement spreads, and give you the impact and engagement reports you'll need to secure leadership buy in. The more people you're involving in your continuous improvement program from all levels, the more critical software becomes.

We will cover what features continuous improvement software we've found drive change faster and more efficiently later in this eBook, but it's important to note first that an organization needs effective leadership for a culture of continuous improvement, and that those leaders will fail without an improvement methodology and enabling technology. The technology you choose should help you create and implement a consistent methodology, which will create momentum in your improvement culture.

The Advantage of Improvement Software

Organizations that employ continuous improvement software to manage top-down initiatives, bottom-up daily improvement, and strategy deployment make more improvements in less time for a greater impact.

I. Accelerate Your Rate of Change

Building an improvement culture doesn't have to be slow and painful. Thankfully, the right technology not only fosters an improvement culture in all the important ways we've discussed, but it also accelerates improvement in an organization.

The steps in each improvement cycle can be broken down as follows:

1. CAPTURE more opportunities for improvement
2. IMPLEMENT a higher percentage of those opportunities
3. MEASURE key activity, engagement, and impact metrics
4. SHARE knowledge & impact across your organization
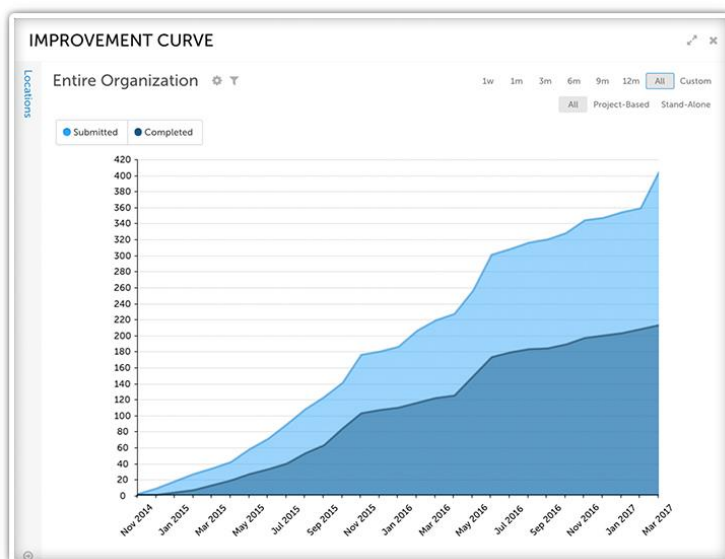
The right software accelerates every step of the improvement cycle so that you're able to make more improvement in less time for greater impact.

Teams that use KaiNexus follow through on over 75% of their improvements.

$2,051,625
Impact in 6 Months

75%
of Captured Ideas Implemented

"There's much more transparency in our organization now of what improvements are going on. KaiNexus has allowed for a much more consistent reporting structure.; it's been huge in standardizing our approach to improvement."

- LeaAnn Teague, Senior Lean Lead

Though we can only comment on our own improvement software, teams that use KaiNexus follow through on over 75% of their improvements.

This incredible improvement rate can be attributed to four benefits improvement software provides organizations over organizations trying to implement an improvement methodology without specialized technology supporting it.

Improvement Software Provides:

Accessibility:

Leaders and staff ensure nothing falls through the cracks as teams can work together from anywhere.
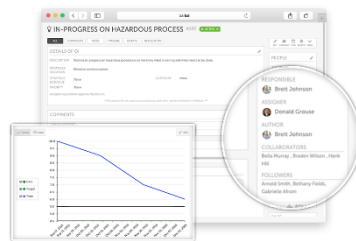
Transparency:

Check progress and KPIs in real-time to get the insight teams need for better decisions.

Efficiency:

Employees can get out of the inbox & streamline communication in one place for maximum efficiency.

Accountability:

See what your teams are working on and know exactly what you need to do at a moment's notice.

In addition to these across-the-board benefits, continuous improvement software also empowers leadership in additional ways, helping them in three areas:

Identify causes of slowdowns:

Managers can scan detailed engagement, activity, and impact metrics to find current bottlenecks and prevent future issues.

Get more out of meetings:

Leaders can stay updated between meetings so face-to-face time is spent on higher level tasks like strategic planning and coaching.

Reduce administrative duties:

Leadership can spend more time on improving and less time managing spreadsheets, presentations, and reminders, meaning their workload can actually decrease.
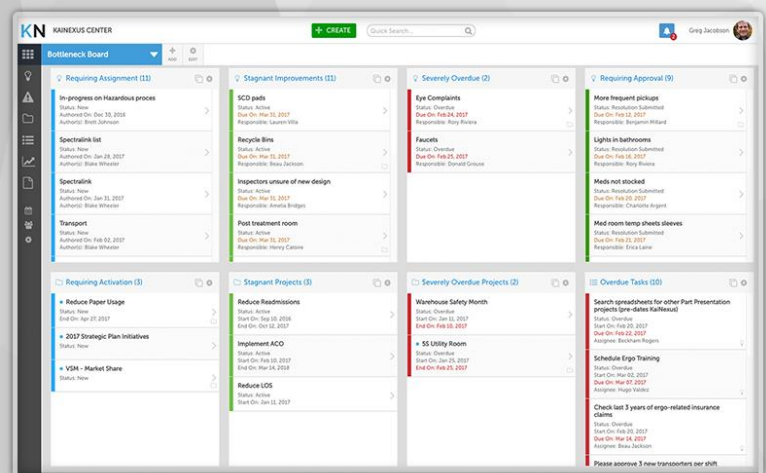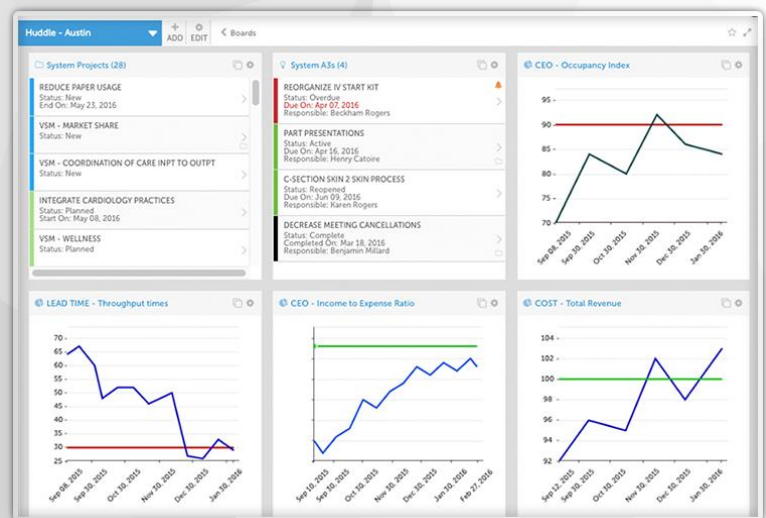
In short, organizations can make more improvement, faster, with technology built to increase their rate of change using features that accelerate improvement. To do so, organizations need to utilize improvement software in three ways when setting their improvement methodology:

Bring the right people together:

Keep the people who care most about each improvement engaged to ensure it gets implemented. Get original ideas and delegate the work by uniting diverse improvement teams.

Keep everyone in the loop:

Streamline improvement workflow by keeping everyone connected using smart notifications and custom emails that tell the right people the right information at the right time.

Identify areas to improve:

Dive into activity and engagement metrics to understand how to accelerate improvement. Identify bottlenecks, locate opportunities to increase engagement, and troubleshoot slowdowns.

II. Engage More People in Improvement

Speed of course is not the only consideration when focusing effort onto improvement; the quality and number of improvements are also of concern. The best way to get more improvements made, and the quality of improvements made to be at their highest, is to ensure that everyone is engaged in improvement. A successful business recognizes their employees' collective power for improvement, and it finds way to harness that potential to create positive change for the company.

Learn more

With an average annual impact of $6,000 per person, the Return on Investment (ROI) of engagement really adds up.
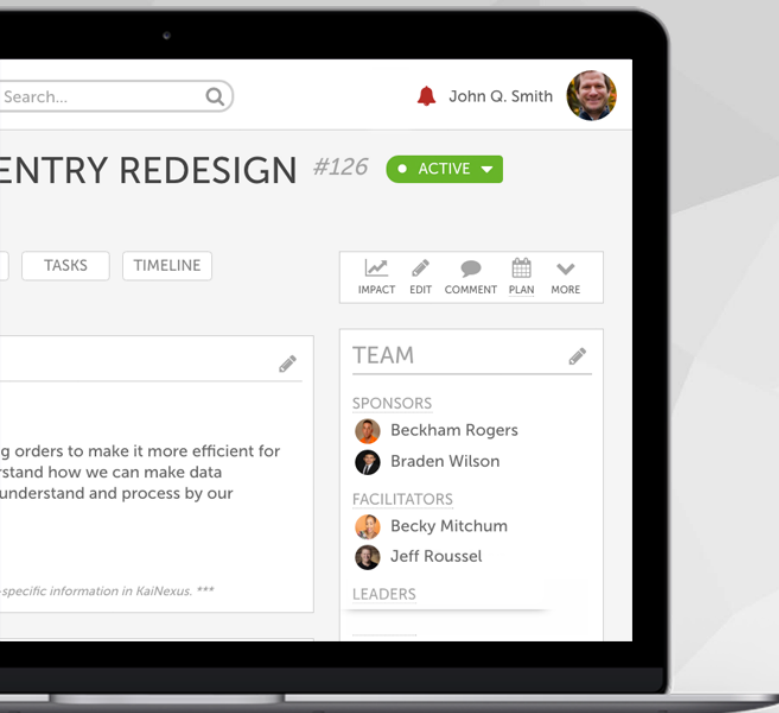
> "KaiNexus has made checking up on our improvement culture easier for the people who need to be driving it from the top."

Matthew Cannistraro
Operations Analyst | Harrington Air Systems

Here's how [continuous improvement software](#) can help you engage your workforce at every level:

Leaders:

Engage leaders with an overview of improvement and impact. Empower them to track progress toward strategic goals and contribute in real-time.

Managers:

Keep managers engaged with greater visibility into improvement. Give them the platform they need to coach and communicate more effectively and efficiently.
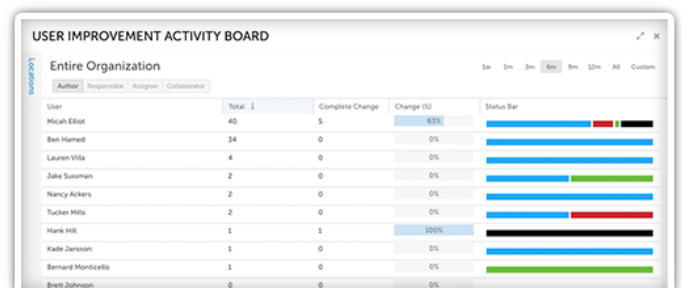
Staff:

Encourage staff to engage in both daily improvement and strategic initiatives by making it easy to identify opportunities, implement improvements, and report success.

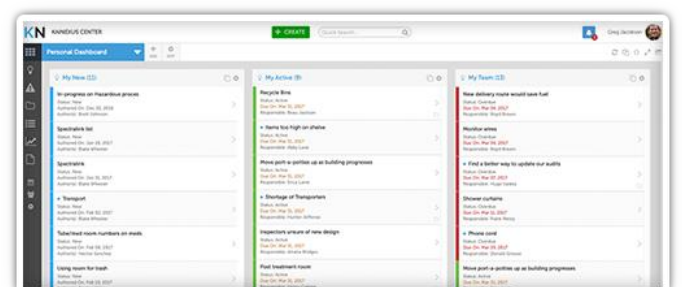As touched on earlier, a key way to engage people in improvement across the whole organization is to eliminate barriers to improvement. No matter what your chosen methodology is, there are some barriers to improvement that are common in all organizations working on continuous improvement, here are the steps you can take to avoid them:

Simplify Your Improvement Process:

Unite your improvement efforts to get everyone speaking the same language and pulling in the same direction. Develop a cohesive, flexible process that will work for everyone.

Eliminate Technical Difficulties:

Your software should be easy enough that everyone can participate. KaiNexus provides an intuitive platform that can be customized to give each person just the right information and responsibility.

Improve Visibility & Collaboration:

Empower employees with the information they need when and where they need it.

Engage from Anywhere:

Tune in to improvement from any screen with KaiNexus. Log in to see updates from your team, track activity and engagement levels across your organization, and collaborate with anyone.

Improvement Underground:

A KaiNexus customer currently has miners deep underground submitting opportunities for improvement while working at the face of the mine. Their ideas for improving efficiency and safety are routed straight to their supervisors in their offices.

Share Boards with Anyone. Anywhere:

Bring classics like Kanban and Kaizen Boards to the digital world. Create new boards to track processes like Strategy Deployment, Gemba Walks, and Daily Huddles. Be everywhere at once with digital boards that supersede time and space.

Learn more about digital boards here.
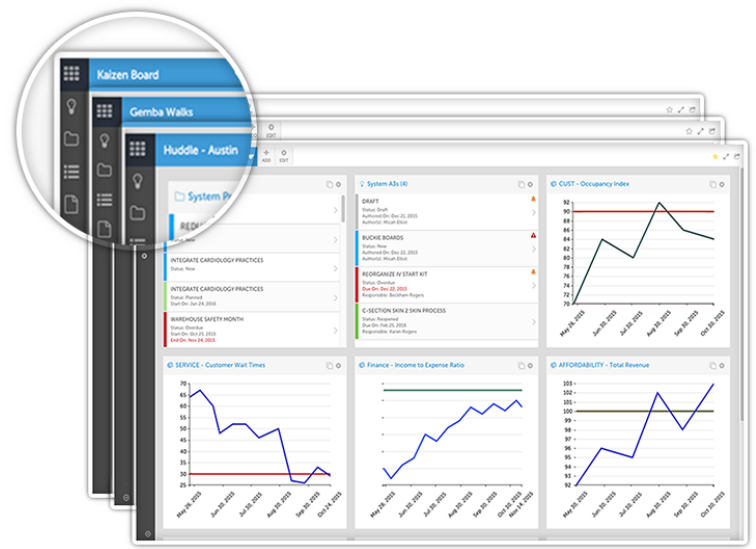
Streamline Communication:

Get out of your inbox and into KaiNexus by commenting directly on each improvement to keep everyone in the loop. You focus on improvement. Let the software keep track of the back and forth for you.

Lead with a Carrot, Not a Stick:

Give a shout out to the people who are improving with built-in recognition features that let you reward engagement and encourage additional participation. Know who deserves some recognition using automated activity reports so you don't waste the day hunting down the information by hand.
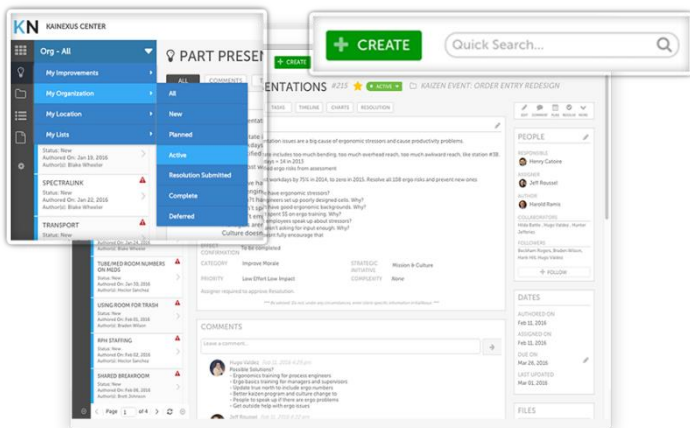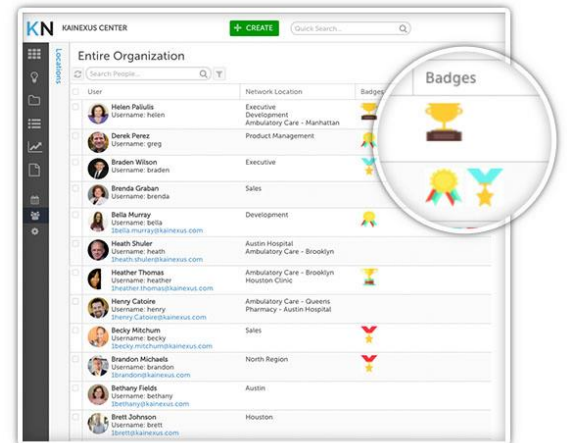
Share Successes, Large & Small

Share improvements across your organization to motivate more people to get involved, demonstrate that each improvement matters, and spread new ideas. When you promote an improvement made in one area, others can adopt it so that each improvement achieves the maximum impact.
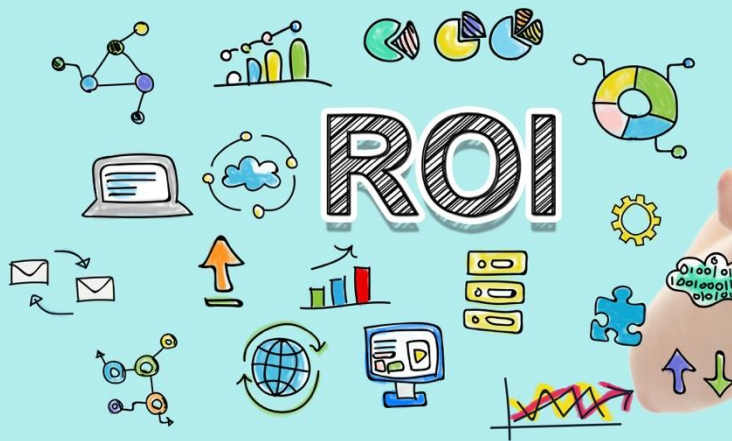
III. Drive a Greater Impact
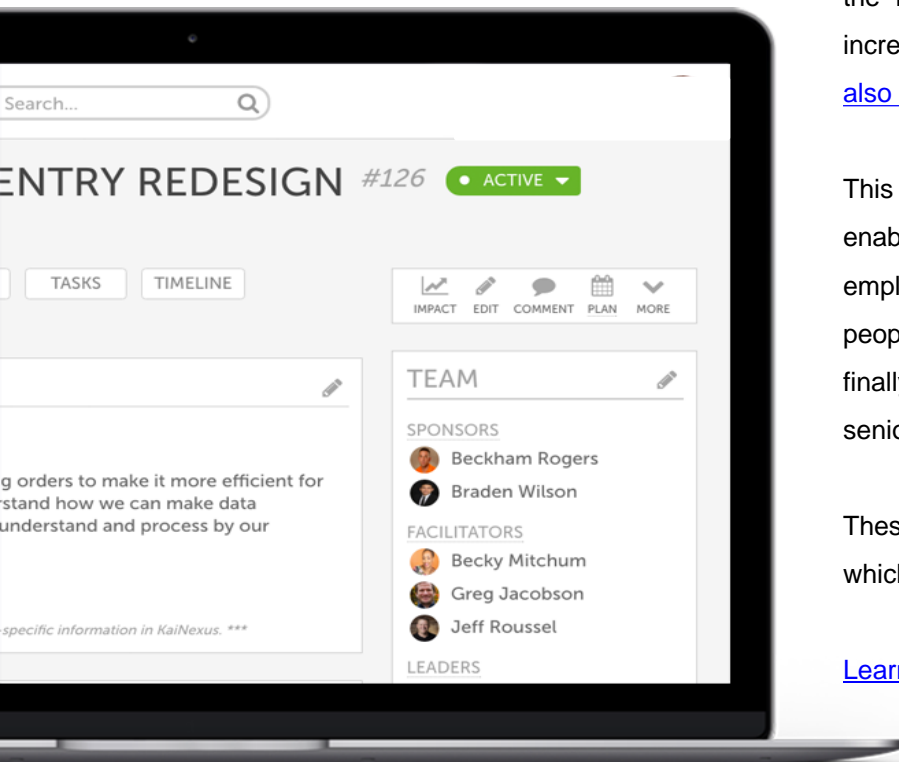
In addition to making change happen quickly, and making the number and quality of improvements rise through increased engagement, continuous improvement software also drive increased impact.

This increased impact is achieved through three drivers: enabling organizations to see metrics at anytime, so employees always know they're right; engaging more people and accelerating change for a greater impact; and finally, by giving everyone from frontline employees to senior leaders insight into impact.

These drivers can be labeled know, grow, and show, which we'll explore in this section.

Learn more.

Why Impact Reporting Matters for Continuous Improvement:

1. Make data-backed decisions
2. Inspire further staff engagement
3. Save time in calculating reports
4. Ramp up executive-level support for continuous improvement
5. Justify your organization's investment in continuous improvement
6. Validate the work that you're doing
7. Show how daily improvements accomplish strategic goals
8. Accurate ROI calculations at the drop of a hat

Know Your Impact

Continuous improvement software enables everyone in the organization to measure and monitor the impact of their improvements in real time without the need for complicated spreadsheet formulas or calculators.

With real-time impact data at the fingertips of staff and management though logging the impact of each improvement, it becomes easy for staff and managers to show the impact of improvements they lead at any time and then show exactly what's driving that impact by drilling down into any level.

The ability to check key metrics and get insights in real time helps staff and leaders make better decisions both during work and during coaching.

For those who need more technical ROI calculations, including multiple currencies, and tracking production and resources KaiNexus offers a series of advanced features.

Grow

The [average annual impact of each KaiNexus user is $12,000](#), so it's clear that engagement drives results. Continuous improvement software engages more people in both daily improvement and strategic projects to maximize and grow impact.

Show

Opportunities knock when you least expect them, and continuous improvement software can make sure that you can answer them when they do thanks to real time data. Instead of being hidden in spreadsheets, impact data is at the ready when key stakeholders drop by or an opportunity to increase engagement and interest in improvement happens.

Continuous improvement software enables organizations to have data at the ready so that everyone can see the benefits of improvement in real time.

Staff:
Your people make improvements. Show them the impact they're having. Nothing boosts engagement like connecting the work with the outcome.

Managers:
Empower managers to [become better coaches](#) with reports that track results. Increase their commitment to improvement with accurate impact data.

Senior Leaders and Executives:
Justify the investment in continuous improvement by giving executives easy insight into the impact it's having on the strategic goals they care about.

"KaiNexus empowers the people who directly impact outcomes. It may be the most powerful tool in the health care cultural revolution."

Kristin Bentz

LEE HEALTH

"We've identified over 1600 improvements, and implemented over 75% of them with an impact of nearly two million dollars."
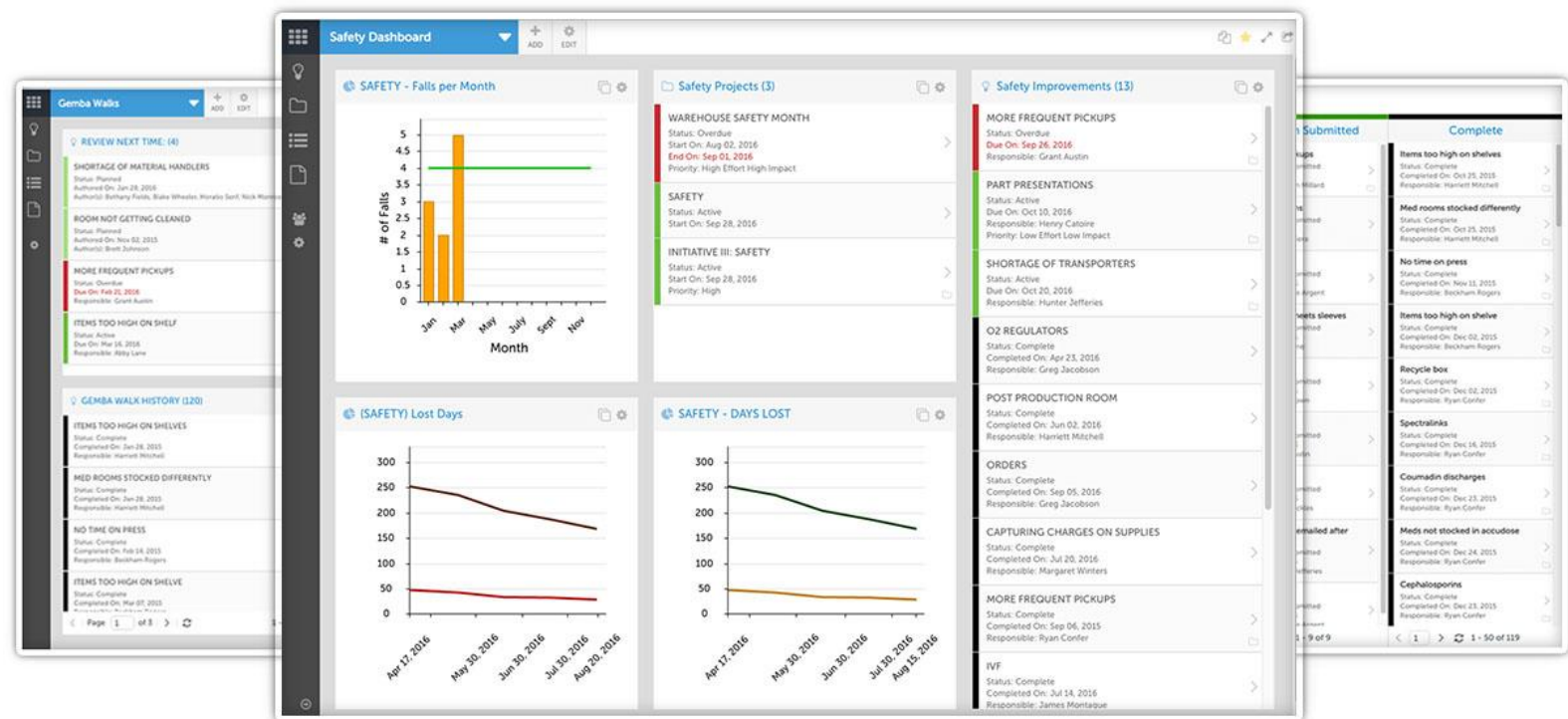
Ron Smith

Mary Greeley
MEDICAL CENTER

"KaiNexus increases visibility, enabling us to spread and share improvements across our large, dispersed organization."

Alice Quesenberry

QOrvo

Learn More About KaiNexus

Organizations of all sizes, in all industries, and in all stages of their improvement journey use KaiNexus to help foster a culture of change and drive more improvement quickly. These organizations recognize that continuous improvement is vital to the success of their organizations, and that like with all other complex businesses processes, they need a platform from which to manage it. They work to engage their entire organization in improvement and value the ideas and opinions of their frontline workers. Our customers strive to develop the methodologies and leadership behaviors critical to developing an improvement culture and understand that they need a software to support those elements.

If you would like to explore if KaiNexus would be a good fit for your organization, contact us for more information.

Even if you're not completely certain that KaiNexus will be right for you, go ahead and check us out today; remember that no organization has ever said that they wish they had waited before taking action. Schedule a live, custom demo now.

The ROI of Continuous Improvement [Free Webinar]

Watch Now

KaiNexus

KaiNexus empowers leading organizations in every industry to start, spread, and sustain an improvement culture.

Wherever you are in your improvement journey, KaiNexus' continuous improvement software will help you take it to the next level with unprecedented visibility, communication, and standardization.

See it in Action

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