Executive Sponsors:
  Kevin Kelly
  David Margalit

Project Sponsors:
  Todd Baldyga
  Priscilla Richards

Empire Belt:
  Steve Lebel

Team Lead:
  Michelle Fiano

Project Team:
  Stephanie Barrett
  Carlos Dachary
  Allison Khachadourian
  Jordan Schellens
  Ron Slosberg

VOICE OF CUSTOMER

"Supply an email address for future concerns and suggestions for the program"

"Provide a list of common errors in technical assistance reports"

"Do check-ins at technical assistance firms to let them know how they are doing"

"Limit review comments to ones that only affect the analysis"

"Technical assistants would prefer a phone call versus an email from reviewer regarding questions"

"Deliver uniform reviews so customers devote less time and money"

Commercial New Construction Program Project Approval Process

BACKGROUND

NYSERDA's Commercial New Construction Program provides technical assistance and financial incentives for customers seeking to implement energy efficiency in their new buildings. Technical assistance consultants in conjunction with the customer team identify, quantify, and recommend energy savings measures in a draft report to NYSERDA. This report is then used as a basis for creating an offer letter for financial incentives. In addition to being reviewed by the outreach project coordinator, the report is reviewed by the NYSERDA project manager. Once the report is approved by the project manager, the NYSERDA project coordinator drafts the offer letter, which is then approved by the project manager. The approved offer letter is then contracted as a purchase order and mailed to the customer. There is a very long cycle time between when a draft technical assistance report is received and when an offer letter is issued.

PROBLEM SUMMARY

131 DAYS to issue an offer letter

92 DAYS between draft report submittal and project manager approval

16% quality yield of second report submittal

Top Problem Areas
- Review process includes multiple touches and redundant reviews
- Multiple people are required to review a technical assistance report before it is considered "approved"
- Too much paper is used in the review process
- Reasons for rejection and acceptable thresholds are not clear upfront to technical assistance

Root Causes of Problems
- Lack of trust among reviewers resulted in redundant reviews
- No training provided for reviewers in the process
- No standardization of reviews makes each one subjective
- Templates are too complex for technical assistants to follow
- Need consistency in data across forms

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

TARGET CYCLE TIME

71 DAYS to issue an offer letter

63 DAYS between draft report submittal and project manager approval

90% quality yield of second report submittal

KAIZEN TAKEAWAYS

	HARD	**Difficulty**	**EASY**

HIGH

HARD / HIGH	EASY / HIGH
• Define report rejections as guidance for technical assistants • State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) requirements attached to solicitation rather than each project	• Send an electronic copy of offer letter and report to applicant • Have the financial system generate the offer letter • Make a phone call to technical assistants pre/post review • Make updates to report template • Remove contacts tab from the technical assistance report

Impact

HARD / LOW	EASY / LOW
• Perform quality assurance/quality control electronically • Assign two monitors for report review	• Teach technical assistants the offer process and goals • Provide outreach project coordinator with review and process training • Implement electronic signatures wherever possible

LOW

Implementation

✓ Checklist for draft technical assistance submittal
  • Create a list of what reviewers look for in a draft submittal
  • Create a list of common errors among submittals

✓ Improved communications and feedback among program staff and customers
  • Improve communication by calling versus emailing technical assistance
  • Create a way for customers to give continual suggestions and improvements for the New Construction Program

✓ Automate warnings in template/calculator

✓ Approval and general process changes
  • Only include legal when SEQRA thresholds are exceeded
  • Project manager reviews the financial system funding codes and dollar amounts
  • Project manager notifies outreach project coordinator of SEQRA requirements
  • Allow outreach project coordinator to make minor edits (formatting/spelling/grammar) to technical assistance report

✓ Begin use of electronic signatures

Parking Lot

• Provide report to customer earlier in the process
• Change offer letter contact from project manager to outreach project coordinator
• No longer send design team a copy of the technical assistance report
• Add the New Construction Program number to the financial system as a new field

RESULTS TO DATE

CURRENT CYCLE TIME

74 DAYS to issue an offer letter

66 DAYS between draft report submittal and project manager approval

33% quality yield of second report submittal