IEE Book Excerpt: Anatomy of a Successful Black Belt

by Quality Digest

(Smarter Solutions Inc.: Austin, Texas) -- Today’s Six Sigma Black Belts need more than technical and analytical skills. They also must work with others, using capabilities that include teaching, mentoring, coaching, and motivating. Here are 10 capabilities essential for a Black Belt today, as defined by Forrest W. Breyfogle, III, CEO of Smarter Solutions Inc.

- Fire in the belly: Has an unquenchable desire to improve the way the organization does business.
- Soft skills: Works effectively with teams and in other organizations.
- Project management: Gets things done successfully and on time.
- Systems thinker: Understands that work is accomplished through processes and that long-lasting results come through systematic improvements to these processes.
- Multitasker: Has no problem managing and scheduling several activities concurrently.
- Unstructured environment manager: Performs well in chaotic environments.
- Big-picture thinker: Aligns efforts to affect significant goals. Avoids analysis paralysis.
- Analytical skills: Reasons adroitly and is comfortable using mathematical techniques such as algebra.
- Organizational navigation skills: Can work around barriers without invoking higher authority.
- Critical thinking skills: Conceptualizes, analyzes, synthesizes, evaluates and applies information from multiple sources.

Adapted from The Integrated Enterprise Excellence System: An Enhanced, Unified Approach to Balanced Scorecards, Strategic Planning, and Business Improvement (Citius Publishing Inc., 2008), by Forrest W. Breyfogle III.

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In a professional career spanning over a quarter century, Forrest Breyfogle has established himself as a leading edge thinker, a prolific author, an innovative consultant, a world-class educator, and a successful business executive. His work is documented in eleven books and over ninety articles on the topic of quality improvement.

A professional engineer, Forrest is also a member of the board of advisors for the University of Texas Center for Performance Excellence. He is the founder and CEO of Smarter Solutions, Inc., an Austin, Texas based consulting firm offering business measurement and improvement consultation and education to a distinguished list of clients worldwide, including BAMA, CIGNA, Dell, HP, IBM, Oracle Packaging, Sherwin Williams, Cameron, TIMET, and TATA. He served his country on active duty in the US Army for 2 years, and has played an active leadership role in professional and educational organizations. Forrest received the prestigious Crosby Medal from the American Society for Quality (ASQ) in 2004 for his book, *Implementing Six Sigma* (second edition). This award is presented annually by the American Society for Quality to the individual who has authored a distinguished book contributing significantly to the extension of the philosophy and application of the principles, methods, or techniques of quality management.

He is a widely recognized authority in the field of management improvement and is a frequent speaker before professional associations and businesses. His earlier work in the field of management science has been widely acclaimed. A previous book, *Implementing Six Sigma*, sold over 40,000 copies and still ranks among the top Amazon books in Applied Mathematics/Engineering Statistics and Industrial Engineering /Quality Control.

He founded Smarter Solutions in 1992 after a 24-year career at IBM. The associates of Smarter Solutions specialize in helping companies throughout the world improve their bottom line and customer satisfaction through the implementation of techniques that are beyond traditional Lean Six Sigma and the balanced scorecard methodologies. His latest and most extensive work has been in the documentation of a new system of enterprise management, the Integrated Enterprise Excellence (IEE) system, in a series of four books. IEE provides a detailed roadmap that builds on and integrates the best practices of earlier disciplines like Six Sigma, Lean, TQM, PDCA, DOE, and TPS combined with innovative analytical tools to produce improvements at the highest level of an enterprise.

In addition to assisting hundreds of major clients in the wise implementation of improvement systems worldwide, Forrest has also developed over 300 hours of classroom instruction used to train executives, managers, and Black Belt practitioners to plan for, implement, and manage IEE systems. He also leads formal seminars and workshops worldwide.

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