

Lean, Six Sigma and Agile. What's the difference?



Lean, Six Sigma, and Agile are three distinct methodologies that are used to improve processes and achieve better business outcomes. Lean and Six Sigma are commonly combined, and their collective tools and data-driven approach can be applied to multiple settings and sectors. They take a structured approach using the DMAIC methodology – Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve and Control (we cover this is a sperate guide). Agile is a project management methodology that emphasizes flexibility, team interaction, and customer collaboration and is particularly powerful when focussing on innovation.

	Process focused		Project focused
	LEAN	SIX SIGMA	AGILE
GOALS	Eliminate waste and provide maximum value to customers with the lowest possible amount of investment.	Reduce variation and defect rates in production processes through statistical evaluation.	A project management approach that involves breaking the project into phases and emphasizes continuous collaboration and improvement
#&&"#()	Uses tools and principles such as Value Stream Mapping, 5S (Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain), and Just-in-Time (JIT) to reduce non-value-adding activities and minimize inefficiencies.	Uses the structured approach of either DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve, Control) or DMADV (Define, Measure, Analyse, Design, Verify).	Employs iterative and incremental development methods, such as Scrum or Kanban , to foster collaboration, flexibility, and continuous improvement.

Combining all three methodologies, a hybrid approach, gives you access to a broad suite of tools for your project whilst maintaining the flexibility and collaborative approach of Agile.



Continuous Improvement For Everyone