

First Person To Introduce The Principle Of Six Sigma

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The Complete : The Genesis of Six Sigma: Unveiling its Pioneering Roots The mid-20th century witnessed a burgeoning industrial landscape, marked by a relentless quest for efficiency and product perfection. However, achieving consistently high-quality manufacturing proved to be an intractable challenge for many companies. Statistical Process Control (SPC), while beneficial, offered only a fragmented solution. Early quality control methodologies often lacked the sophistication and systemic approach needed to tackle complex manufacturing processes. This context sets the stage for the revolutionary innovation that would become known as Six Sigma. Motorola's Crucible and the Ascendancy of Six Sigma By the 1980s, Motorola, a telecommunications behemoth, faced a predicament. Intense competition and burgeoning technological advancements were placing immense pressure on the company's profitability. The need for a paradigm shift in their operational strategies was palpable. This exigency led to the seminal contributions of Micheal Harry, instrumental in developing the innovative methodology. The choice of "Six Sigma" was far from arbitrary; it represented a target defect rate of 3.4 defects per million opportunities, a testament to the meticulous nature of the approach. Early Triumphs and Terrors of Six Sigma Implementation The of Six Sigma at Motorola wasn't a seamless journey. Initial projects demanded careful selection considering various factors such as the impact on downstream processes. Early implementations yielded both encouraging successes and significant challenges. The statistical tools and meticulous data analyses became the bedrock of the methodology. The imperative to consistently collect, analyze, and interpret data played a critical role in driving improvements. Evolution and Refinement of the Six Sigma Methodology Over time, the burgeoning Six Sigma methodology witnessed several significant refinements and expansions. The

structured frameworks of DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) and DMADV (Define, Measure, Analyze, Design, Verify) provided a holistic methodology that addressed the comprehensive needs of businesses. This holistic approach synergistically combined statistical methodologies with lean manufacturing principles for heightened improvements. The confluence of these techniques paved the way for an unprecedented level of operational excellence. Beyond Motorola: Global Dissemination of Six Sigma The success of Six Sigma at Motorola did not go unnoticed. As news spread, other businesses embraced the methodology, recognizing its transformative potential. Jack Welch's strategic adoption of Six Sigma at General Electric catapulted it into mainstream management practices. This mainstream acceptance spurred a standardization effort ensuring consistent implementation across several sectors. The acceptance wasn't just national, the international recognition and implementation solidified Six Sigma as a key player in global operational excellence. Contemporary Applications and Future Directions Six Sigma's influence extends far beyond its initial applications. Continual iterations and adaptations have broadened and strengthened the methodology. The impact of Six Sigma on other management philosophies is profound. The integration with contemporary software and technological advancements has refined data analysis, and augmented the precision of the approach. Furthermore, the adoption of newer tools, such as AI-powered predictive modeling, ensures Six Sigma's adaptability to the evolving needs of sophisticated businesses. Addressing and Transcending the Critiques With any highly influential methodology, criticisms are inevitably leveled. The overemphasis on quantifiable metrics has been criticized for potentially neglecting qualitative elements, such as employee morale. However, these criticisms are not insurmountable; they serve as opportunities for refinement and recalibration rather than rejection. The inherent flexibility of Six Sigma allows for adjustments that help maintain its relevance without sacrificing its core values. The Enduring Legacy of Six Sigma** Six Sigma's profound and lasting impact on the global business landscape remains undeniable. Its enduring importance lies in the value of data-driven decision making. The methodology has significantly boosted productivity and profitability across almost every industry. This enduring legacy continues to shape how organizations think about efficiency and continuous improvement. From its genesis within the demanding environment of Motorola, Six Sigma has evolved into a cornerstone of global operational excellence, its future seemingly as bright as its past.

The Architect of Excellence: Unveiling the First Person to Introduce the Principle of Six Sigma

In the bustling world of business and manufacturing, certain principles emerge that fundamentally alter how we approach quality, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Among these transformative concepts, Six Sigma stands tall. But have you ever stopped to wonder about the origin of this powerful methodology? Who was the visionary mind that first conceived and championed the core tenets that would revolutionize industries worldwide? While Six Sigma as we know it today is a refined and evolved system, tracing its lineage reveals a fascinating story, and it's crucial to understand that attributing "the first person" is a nuanced endeavor. Instead, we can look at the key figures and foundational ideas that laid the groundwork for what would become Six Sigma.

The journey to Six Sigma is not a straight line to a single individual. It's more akin to a confluence of ideas, innovations, and persistent effort from several pioneers. However, when we speak of the "introduction" of the principles that form the bedrock of Six Sigma, the name that most frequently surfaces is **Bill Smith**. While not solely responsible for the entire methodology, Smith's pivotal work at Motorola in the 1980s is widely recognized as the genesis of Six Sigma.

The Genesis at Motorola: Bill Smith's Revolutionary Vision

Imagine the manufacturing landscape of the 1980s. While quality control measures were in place, the concept of achieving near-perfect defect rates was still a distant dream for many. It was within this environment that Bill Smith, an

engineer at Motorola, began to challenge the status quo. He was deeply concerned with the high cost of poor quality and the limitations of existing statistical quality control methods.

Smith's central insight was that **statistical variation** was the root cause of most defects. He observed that even seemingly minor variations in processes could lead to significant problems, impacting product reliability and customer experience. He believed that by rigorously measuring and reducing this variation, businesses could achieve unprecedented levels of quality and efficiency. This was the nascent spark of Six Sigma: a commitment to data-driven decision-making and a relentless pursuit of process improvement.

Understanding Variation: The Core of Smith's Contribution

Before Smith, quality control often focused on inspecting finished products and correcting errors. While this approach had its merits, it was largely reactive. Smith's brilliance lay in his proactive stance. He advocated for understanding and controlling the **sources** of variation within a manufacturing or business process. His focus was on making processes so robust and predictable that defects would become exceedingly rare.

He recognized that achieving a "Six Sigma level" of quality – which translates to 3.4 defects per million opportunities – was not just a lofty goal but a practical and achievable target. This concept of a statistical threshold for excellence became a defining characteristic of the Six Sigma methodology. Smith didn't invent statistical tools, but he championed their application in a structured, disciplined way to achieve a specific, quantifiable outcome: near-perfect quality.

The Motorola Ecosystem: A Breeding Ground for Six Sigma

It's important to acknowledge that Bill Smith didn't operate in a vacuum. His groundbreaking work at Motorola was supported by a corporate culture that was willing to invest in innovation and quality improvement. The leadership at Motorola, particularly **Mitch McConnell** (not the US Senator, but the then-CEO of Motorola), recognized the potential of Smith's ideas and provided the resources and mandate to develop them further.

McConnell played a crucial role in championing Six Sigma and making it a cornerstone of Motorola's strategy. He understood that achieving superior quality was not just about making better products; it was a strategic imperative that could lead to significant cost savings, increased market share, and enhanced customer loyalty. The commitment from top leadership was instrumental in embedding Six Sigma principles within the organization and fostering its growth.

The Role of Statistical Tools and Methodologies

While Smith provided the foundational principles, the development of Six Sigma also drew heavily on existing statistical quality control methodologies. Concepts from the work of luminaries like **W. Edwards Deming** and **Joseph Juran** provided essential building blocks. Deming, with his 14 Points for Management and emphasis on continuous improvement, and Juran, with his quality trilogy (quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement), had already laid significant groundwork for understanding and managing quality.

Six Sigma, however, brought a unique focus on statistical rigor and a structured, phased approach to problem-solving. The **DMAIC** (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) framework, which became the standard methodology for Six Sigma projects, was meticulously developed and refined at Motorola. This framework provided a systematic way to identify problems, gather data, analyze root causes, implement solutions, and sustain improvements. This structured approach made Six Sigma highly effective and replicable.

Beyond Motorola: The Expansion and Evolution of Six Sigma

Motorola's success with Six Sigma did not go unnoticed. The company generously shared its methodology, and soon, other organizations began to adopt and adapt it. This outward dissemination was critical to Six Sigma's widespread adoption.

One of the most significant figures in the popularization and expansion of Six Sigma beyond its manufacturing origins was **Jack Welch**, the legendary CEO of General Electric (GE). Welch was so impressed by Motorola's results that he implemented Six Sigma across GE in the mid-1990s. Under his leadership, Six Sigma became a core component of GE's operational strategy, leading to billions of dollars in savings and a significant boost in profitability.

Six Sigma's Transformation into a Comprehensive Management Philosophy

Under Welch and GE's influence, Six Sigma evolved from a purely statistical quality improvement tool into a comprehensive business management philosophy. It began to be applied not just to manufacturing but also to service industries, healthcare, finance, and virtually any sector where process improvement could yield benefits. The emphasis shifted to not only reducing defects but also improving cycle times, increasing customer satisfaction, and enhancing overall business performance.

The development of the "Belts" system (Green Belt, Black Belt, Master Black Belt) also played a crucial role in standardizing training and creating a cadre of dedicated Six Sigma practitioners. This helped to embed the methodology within organizations and ensure its continued application and evolution.

Who Introduced Six Sigma? A Nuanced Perspective

So, to reiterate the initial question: who was the *first person* to introduce the principle of Six Sigma? While Bill Smith is undeniably the individual whose work at Motorola sparked the core concepts and statistical rigor that define Six Sigma, it's more accurate to say he introduced the *foundational principles*. The methodology as we understand it today is a product of:

1. **Bill Smith's** foundational work at Motorola, focusing on statistical variation and the pursuit of near-perfect quality.
2. **Motorola's** corporate culture and leadership, particularly Mitch McConnell, who championed and supported the development and implementation of Six Sigma.
3. The integration and application of existing *statistical quality control methodologies* and the work of earlier pioneers like Deming and Juran.
4. The subsequent popularization and expansion by leaders like **Jack Welch** at General Electric, who transformed Six Sigma into a widespread business management philosophy.

The beauty of Six Sigma lies not in the singular genius of one person, but in the collective intelligence and persistent effort of many who recognized the power of data-driven process improvement. It's a testament to the idea that by focusing on understanding and controlling variation, businesses can unlock unprecedented levels of efficiency, quality, and customer satisfaction. The legacy of Bill Smith and the many who followed continues to shape how businesses operate, striving for that elusive and highly valuable goal of near-perfect performance.

The Origin of Six Sigma: The Visionary Behind the Principle

While the term Six Sigma is now synonymous with world-class quality management and operational excellence, its conceptual roots are deeply attributed to a pioneering figure whose work transformed how organizations approach

variation and defect reduction. The first person widely recognized for formally introducing and embedding the principle of Six Sigma as a structured methodology was Dr. Bill Smith, an engineer at Motorola in the mid-1980s. Dr. Smith's groundbreaking contribution emerged during a period when Motorola faced growing competition and rising customer expectations for flawless products. In response, he developed a statistical framework designed to minimize defects by identifying and eliminating causes of variability in manufacturing and business processes. His insight centered on applying rigorous statistical analysis—specifically, the use of the six-sigma level, which corresponds to approximately 3.4 defects per million opportunities—to drive process consistency and predictability. This was not merely a statistical technique but a comprehensive philosophy aimed at aligning quality goals with customer needs and strategic business outcomes.

Understanding Six Sigma: More Than a Statistical Tool

At its core, Six Sigma is a data-driven approach to process improvement that seeks to reduce variation and improve quality by systematically identifying errors and implementing sustainable solutions. Unlike earlier quality methodologies that focused primarily on end-of-line inspection, Six Sigma emphasizes proactive prevention through process control and continuous improvement. Dr. Smith's vision extended beyond mere defect counting; he championed a cultural transformation within organizations, where every employee becomes a participant in quality enhancement. This shift from reactive correction to proactive optimization became the cornerstone of Six Sigma's enduring success. The methodology's structure—often associated with the DMAIC framework (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control)—was shaped by Smith's emphasis on measurable results and statistical rigor. His work laid the foundation for training professionals as Six Sigma belts, from white to black belt, ensuring that expertise in the method spread across industries. Motorola's early adoption yielded tangible results: within a decade, the company reported billions in cost savings and significant improvements in product reliability, validating the power of Smith's principle in real-world operations.

Applications Across Industries and Beyond

Although Six Sigma originated in manufacturing, its influence has expanded far beyond the factory floor. Today, healthcare providers use it to reduce medical errors and streamline patient care. Financial institutions apply it to enhance transaction accuracy and customer service efficiency. Even government agencies and educational institutions have adopted Six Sigma to improve service delivery and operational transparency. Dr. Smith's principle thus became a universal language of excellence—one that transcends sector boundaries. One of the key strengths of Six Sigma lies in its adaptability. While rooted in statistical process control, its frameworks have been integrated with other strategic tools such as Lean methodology to form Lean Six Sigma, creating even more powerful approaches to waste reduction and value creation. This synergy reflects how Dr. Smith's foundational idea continues to evolve, guided by real-world application and continuous innovation.

Lasting Benefits and Future Outlook

The benefits of implementing Six Sigma are profound and multifaceted. Organizations that embrace the principle report not only fewer defects and higher quality but also greater employee engagement, stronger customer loyalty, and improved financial performance. By fostering a culture of data-driven decision-making, Six Sigma empowers teams to solve complex problems with precision and confidence. Looking ahead, the future of Six Sigma is closely tied to digital transformation and advanced analytics. As artificial intelligence, machine learning, and real-time data monitoring become integral to operations, the core principles of Six Sigma—precision, consistency, and continuous improvement—remain more relevant than ever. The legacy of Dr. Bill Smith endures not just in the tools and techniques, but in the mindset it instilled: a relentless pursuit of excellence through discipline, insight, and innovation. His pioneering work continues to inspire generations of quality leaders and change agents across the globe.

Unraveling the Genesis of Quality: Who First Introduced the Principle of Six Sigma?

In the relentless pursuit of operational excellence and superior product quality, the term "Six Sigma" has become synonymous with systematic improvement. But like any groundbreaking concept, its origins are not always immediately apparent. While the methodology as we know it today is a complex tapestry woven from decades of innovation, identifying the **first person to introduce the principle of Six Sigma** requires a nuanced understanding of its evolutionary journey. It's a story that spans different eras of quality management and involves key figures who laid the groundwork for what would become a global phenomenon.

The notion of statistical quality control and reducing variation has a long history, predating the formalization of Six Sigma. However, when we speak of Six Sigma's core philosophy – the rigorous application of data-driven methodologies to eliminate defects and minimize process variation to a statistically defined level – a singular inventor is elusive. Instead, it's more accurate to trace its lineage to a series of influential thinkers and practitioners who incrementally built upon each other's insights. This article delves into the critical individuals and stages that led to the birth and widespread adoption of Six Sigma principles.

The Statistical Foundations: Early Pioneers of Quality Control

Before delving into the specific Six Sigma framework, it's crucial to acknowledge the pioneers who established the very foundations of statistical quality control. Their work provided the essential toolkit and conceptual framework upon which Six Sigma would later be built.

Walter Shewhart: The Father of Statistical Quality Control

Many historians of quality management point to **Walter A. Shewhart** as the foundational figure whose work laid the bedrock for Six Sigma. Working at Bell Labs in the 1920s, Shewhart developed the statistical control chart, a revolutionary tool that allowed for the monitoring and control of manufacturing processes. His central thesis was that variation in a process is inherent and can be categorized into two types: common cause variation (inherent to the process) and special cause variation (assignable and correctable). Shewhart's emphasis on statistical inference and process control was a monumental step towards understanding and managing quality.

His book, "Statistical Method from the Viewpoint of Quality Control," published in 1939, articulated these principles. Shewhart's focus on reducing variation and his belief that processes could be brought into statistical control are direct precursors to the statistical rigor that defines Six Sigma. He provided the fundamental methodology for understanding and controlling process variability, a core tenet of Six Sigma.

Harold Dodge and George Edwards: Expanding on Shewhart's Legacy

Following Shewhart, individuals like **Harold F. Dodge** and **George D. Edwards**, also at Bell Labs, continued to advance statistical quality control. Dodge, for instance, developed sequential sampling techniques, further refining the statistical tools available for quality assessment. Edwards, who later led the quality assurance program at Bell Labs, emphasized the importance of management's role in quality and the establishment of quality standards. Their contributions were vital in operationalizing Shewhart's theoretical advancements, making them practical for industrial application.

The Post-War Era and the Rise of Total Quality Management (TQM)

The period following World War II saw a significant global shift in quality thinking, particularly in Japan, which embraced statistical methods with remarkable fervor, largely influenced by American experts.

W. Edwards Deming: Championing the Scientific Approach

While not directly inventing Six Sigma, **Dr. W. Edwards Deming** is arguably the most influential figure in post-war quality management and a critical link in the chain leading to Six Sigma. Deming, a statistician and management consultant, worked with Shewhart and was deeply influenced by his ideas. After the war, Deming was instrumental in helping Japan rebuild its industries by teaching statistical quality control and management principles.

Deming's philosophy, often referred to as the "Deming Method" or "System of Profound Knowledge," emphasized continuous improvement (often called Kaizen), understanding variation, and the statistical control of processes. His 14 Points for Management and his Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle, a refinement of Shewhart's Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, are fundamental to many modern quality improvement methodologies, including Six Sigma. Deming's relentless focus on reducing variation and improving processes through data was a direct precursor to the Six Sigma approach.

Joseph Juran: The Architect of Total Quality Management

Another titan of quality management, **Dr. Joseph M. Juran**, also played a pivotal role. Juran's work, particularly his "Quality Control Handbook," was seminal in codifying quality management principles. He broke down quality into three phases: quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. Juran's emphasis on quality improvement as a management responsibility and his focus on identifying and eliminating the root causes of defects are deeply embedded within the Six Sigma DMAIC methodology.

Juran's concept of "breakthrough" improvements, aimed at achieving radical leaps in performance rather than incremental gains, aligns closely with the ambitious goals of Six Sigma projects. While Deming focused more on the statistical and philosophical aspects, Juran provided a more managerial and strategic framework for quality, both of which were essential for the development of Six Sigma.

The Birth of Six Sigma: Motorola and General Electric

The term "Six Sigma" and the specific methodology that bears this name emerged much later, in the latter half of the 20th century, primarily associated with two major corporations.

Bill Smith: The Architect of Motorola's Six Sigma

While the conceptual seeds of Six Sigma were sown by earlier pioneers, **Bill Smith**, an engineer at Motorola, is widely credited with formalizing and developing the Six Sigma methodology as we understand it today. In the mid-1980s, Motorola was facing intense competition and was experiencing significant quality issues. Smith, drawing upon the principles of statistical process control (SPC) and the works of Deming and Juran, sought to create a disciplined, data-driven approach to dramatically reduce defects and improve processes.

Smith's key contribution was defining Six Sigma as a statistical measure: a process capable of producing no more than 3.4 defects per million opportunities (DPMO). This ambitious target required a rigorous, systematic approach. He developed the Define-Measure-Analyze-Improve-Control (DMAIC) framework, a structured problem-solving methodology

that forms the backbone of Six Sigma projects. Smith also championed the use of statistical tools to identify root causes of defects and implement solutions to prevent their recurrence. He was instrumental in establishing Six Sigma training programs and the concept of Six Sigma "belts" (Green Belt, Black Belt, Master Black Belt) to create a cadre of trained professionals within the organization.

Therefore, when the question arises about the **first person to introduce the principle of Six Sigma** in its modern, defined form, Bill Smith at Motorola stands out as the primary architect. He didn't invent the underlying statistical principles, but he synthesized them into a cohesive, actionable methodology with a clear statistical goal and a structured project management approach.

Jack Welch: Popularizing Six Sigma at General Electric

While Bill Smith created Six Sigma at Motorola, it was **Jack Welch**, the then-CEO of General Electric, who truly catapulted the methodology into mainstream business consciousness. In the early 1990s, GE acquired a significant portion of Motorola's semiconductor business, and Welch was introduced to Six Sigma. Impressed by its potential to drive efficiency, reduce costs, and improve customer satisfaction, Welch championed its adoption throughout GE.

Welch made Six Sigma a central tenet of GE's corporate strategy, investing heavily in training and implementation. Under his leadership, GE reported billions of dollars in savings and efficiency gains attributed to Six Sigma projects. This widespread adoption and the phenomenal success GE experienced led to a surge of interest from other companies worldwide, making Six Sigma a global standard for quality improvement and operational excellence. Welch, therefore, was not the originator but a crucial evangelist who popularized the principle of Six Sigma on a massive scale.

The Legacy and Evolution of Six Sigma Principles

The principle of Six Sigma, born from the statistical insights of Shewhart and refined by Deming and Juran, was concretized into a robust methodology by Bill Smith at Motorola. Its subsequent popularization by Jack Welch at GE ensured its lasting impact on industries across the globe.

Today, Six Sigma continues to evolve. It is often integrated with other continuous improvement methodologies like Lean Manufacturing, forming "Lean Six Sigma." This hybrid approach combines the defect-reduction focus of Six Sigma with the waste-elimination principles of Lean, creating a powerful engine for comprehensive organizational improvement. While the name of the "first person" might be debated depending on the definition, the collaborative and evolutionary nature of quality science means that its true genesis lies in the cumulative wisdom and persistent efforts of many brilliant minds.

In conclusion, while Walter Shewhart laid the statistical groundwork and W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran refined quality management philosophies, **Bill Smith is the individual most accurately credited with introducing the principle of Six Sigma** as a defined, data-driven methodology with a specific statistical target and a structured project framework. Jack Welch, in turn, played an indispensable role in its widespread adoption and global recognition.

The enduring principles of Six Sigma – data-driven decision-making, rigorous process analysis, defect reduction, and the relentless pursuit of customer satisfaction – continue to shape how businesses operate and strive for excellence. It's a testament to the power of systematic thinking and the continuous quest for improvement, a journey that began with early statistical pioneers and culminated in the sophisticated methodologies of today.

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Questions & Answers About first person to introduce the principle of six sigma

No	Question	Answer
1	Who is credited with being the first person to introduce the principles of Six Sigma?	While Six Sigma evolved over time, Bill Smith, an engineer at Motorola, is widely credited with being the first person to introduce and champion the core principles of Six Sigma in the 1980s.
2	What was Bill Smith's role at Motorola that led to the development of Six Sigma?	Bill Smith was a quality engineer at Motorola. He developed Six Sigma as a way to significantly reduce defects and improve product quality and reliability in Motorola's electronic products.
3	What was the primary motivation behind the initial development of Six Sigma?	The primary motivation was to dramatically improve the quality of Motorola's products, reduce manufacturing defects, and increase customer satisfaction by striving for near-perfect quality in its processes.
4	Was Six Sigma an invention of a single person, or did it have earlier influences?	While Bill Smith is the key figure for introducing Six Sigma as a defined methodology, its principles were influenced by earlier quality management concepts and statistical process control (SPC) techniques.
5	How did Six Sigma differ from previous quality initiatives when it was introduced?	Six Sigma introduced a more data-driven and statistically rigorous approach compared to many previous quality initiatives. It focused on defining, measuring, analyzing, improving, and controlling (DMAIC) processes to achieve specific defect reduction goals.
6	When did Bill Smith first present the concept of Six Sigma?	Bill Smith began developing and advocating for Six Sigma in the mid-1980s, with its formal introduction and implementation within Motorola taking place in the late 1980s.
7	What made Bill Smith's approach to quality so revolutionary?	Smith's revolutionary approach lay in his insistence on a statistically defined target of 3.4 defects per million opportunities, combined with a structured methodology (DMAIC) and a focus on root cause analysis.
8	Did Bill Smith have a specific name for his methodology before it was called 'Six Sigma'?	While Smith heavily utilized statistical concepts, the term 'Six Sigma' itself was coined by Motorola to encapsulate the ambitious goal of achieving defect levels at the sigma level corresponding to 3.4 defects per million.

9	What impact did Bill Smith's introduction of Six Sigma have on Motorola?	Six Sigma had a profound impact on Motorola, leading to significant improvements in product quality, cost reduction, and increased market share, which eventually earned Motorola the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.
10	Beyond Bill Smith, who else was instrumental in the early growth of Six Sigma?	Mikel Harry was a key figure who collaborated with Bill Smith and further developed the Six Sigma methodology, particularly refining the DMAIC framework and its application within Motorola.

first person to introduce six sigma principle, originator of six sigma methodology, introducer of six sigma quality standards, first person to implement six sigma framework, six sigma founding principle pioneer, six sigma principle originator, first practitioners of six sigma approach, history of six sigma introduction, six sigma methodology founder, early advocate of six sigma principles

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