

CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY'S CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS: THE 5-M APPROACH

Our Commitment

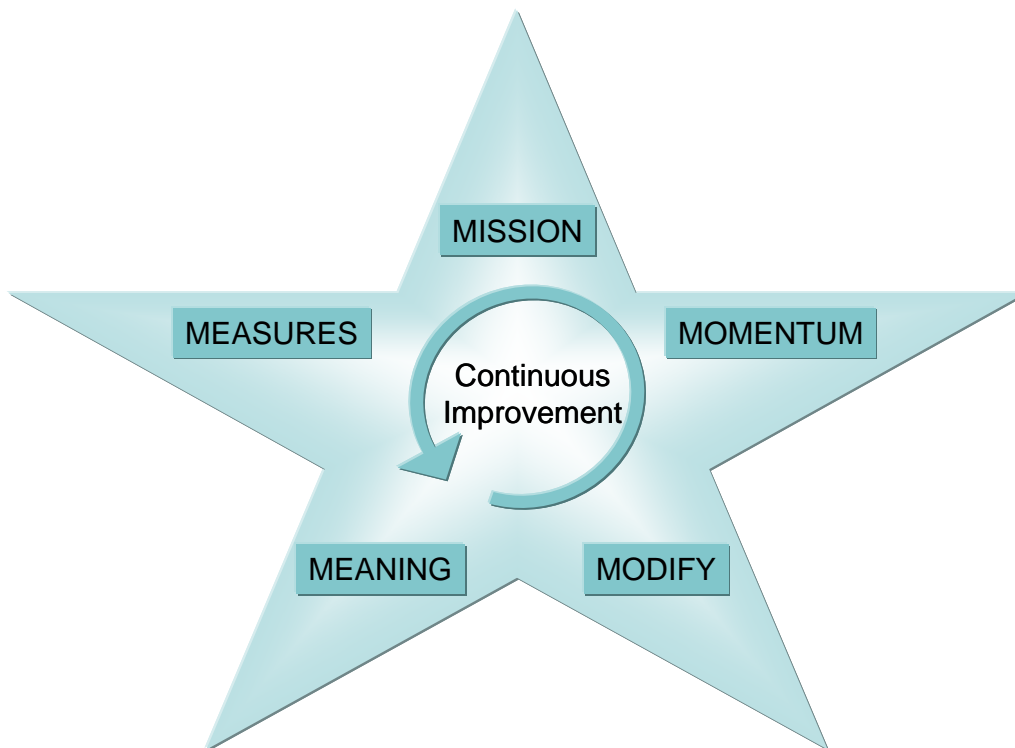
Cedarville University is committed to continuous improvement – seeking ways to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, efficacy and emergence of the institution. This means that we actively seek to create value (effectiveness), to emphasize stewardship (efficiency), to increase our impact (efficacy) and to sustain our ability to change (emergence).

As a Christian learning community we recognize that the most significant barriers we face to our continued effectiveness, efficiency, efficacy and emergence are internal rather than external. In particular we understand that any organization is subject to the debilitating effects of momentum (“We’ve always done this way!”), inertia (“We’ve never done it this way!”) and entropy (losing our sense of direction and determination).

Sensitive, then, to both that which strengthens our capacity and desire to creatively and continuously deliver an education consistent with Biblical truth, and aware of that which could weaken that capacity and desire, Cedarville University has created a strategic continuous improvement effort we call the “5-M Approach.”

The 5-M Approach

The 5-M Approach highlights five interacting processes essential to strategic continuous improvement.



Mission	The process by which divisions, schools and departments identify their distinctive value-added service contributions to the university's mission in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO they serve • WHAT they serve • HOW they serve
Measures	The process by which divisions and departments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify specific objectives crucial to successful accomplishment of their mission • establish specific assessable outcomes related to the successful achievement of their objectives • select benchmarks as standards for evaluating their outcomes helping to target relative strengths and areas needing improvement
Meaning	The process by which divisions and departments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss assessment results • determine what the results mean in terms of identifying areas of strength (to support and amplify) and weakness (to improve) • decide how best to respond (priorities, resources, action plan, responsibilities)
Modification	The process by which divisions and departments translate intention into action and actually improve performance
Momentum	The process by which divisions and departments demonstrate how the continuous improvement process has become a normal part of the division/department culture (includes revisiting mission and measures and revising where appropriate)

Implementation Principles

Cedarville University's 5-M Approach is based on a set of fundamental principles:

- (1) **Every decision and department at Cedarville University has a primary responsibility to create and deliver value to an identifiable set of internal and/or external stakeholders.** Service to these stakeholders demands that we know who they are, what their expectations are and what their experience has been with us (how well their expectations have been met).
- (2) **Every division and department at Cedarville University is obligated to engage in a process that seeks continually enhanced ways to serve their stakeholders.** In particular divisions and departments should seek to enhance their
 - **recognition** of both continuing and changing needs of stakeholders
 - **responsiveness** to the unique needs of individual stakeholders
 - **reliability** in delivering the highest quality responses to the needs of stakeholders
- (3) **Every division and department at Cedarville University should be an active participant in organizational learning.** This is reflected in an eagerness to adopt and adapt best

practices learned from other departments and divisions, and a readiness to share their own best **practices with other departments and divisions.**

- (4) **Every division and department at Cedarville University possesses both shared** (common to other divisions and departments) **and unique properties.** The Cedarville 7-M Approach to continuous improvement seeks to develop appropriate areas of university-wide conformity (some common measures of performance, similar assessment reporting formats and forms, etc.), as well as encouraging equally appropriate areas of diversity (unique measures, unique continuous improvement organization structures, etc.).
- (5) **Every division and department at Cedarville University should achieve a close relationship between their strategic planning and continuous improvement assessment processes.** Strategy and assessment are intimately connected (or should be) – strategy identifies targets of **anticipated impact** while assessment monitors **achieved impact.** The reciprocal influence of these processes on each other is important and requires sustained attention and commitment.