SSA
Six Sigma Academy

July 28, 1995

From: Dr. Mikel J. Harry

To: Mr. Serge Huot

Subject: General Correspondence & Coordination

Serge;

First, I must provide you with a humble apology for sending this communication during your holiday, as I am sure your are having a marvelous time in Europe.

As you may already know, one of the first steps in the Six Sigma Deployment Process is the identification and selection of the Champions and Master Black Belts (MBB's). Once these key individuals have been identified and selected, the related training process should be initiated soon as possible. I most respectfully request that you judiciously consider the following schedule for the training process:

> **August 28 through September 1:**   The Champions and MBB's will be concurrently exposed (in the same class) to the Strategies, Tactics, and Tools associated with the successful application of Six Sigma. During this week of training, the participants will discover the Vision of Six Sigma (as well as the related system of tools) and then formulate detailed deployment plans and operational objectives for each of their respective businesses. Attachment A presents the general criteria and expectations of a MBB. The aforementioned training will be conducted in Phoenix, Arizona.

> **September 11 through September 16:**   The MBB's will return to Arizona for their second week of training. This particular session is focused on the application and deployment of advanced Six Sigma Tools and Tactics, as well as the Breakthrough Strategy. The Champions do not participate in this training session.

During the break between the two training sessions, the Champions and MBB's will identify the Black Belt Candidates. As a consequence, I strongly recommend that the Black Belt candidates be identified and selected only after the Champions have completed their training cycle. The reasons for this should be fairly apparent.

I very much look forward to a positive response concerning the training dates, as this time frame represents the limit of my availability during the months of August and September. It will be a distinct pleasure working with you on August 16.

From the Sigma Ranch in sunny Arizona.

In addition, several real-life application case studies will be spontaneously presented and carefully analyzed to reinforce understanding and use of the advanced tools.

It should also be noted that every Master Black Belts possess a unique set of strengths and weaknesses. Each candidate should be self-aware of their particular set. During the course of mentoring, the candidates will review their set of strengths and weaknesses with the composite group and should be prepared for candid discussion and commentary.

Prior to the scheduled mentoring (training) session, each candidate must prepare a one hour training module (not to exceed 1.5 hours) on an application topic their choosing; however, the topic must be tool related. In addition, the selection must **not** be a "first order" tool; e.g, Pareto analysis, fishbone diagrams, Xbar and R chart, etc. At the appropriate time during the mentoring process, each candidate will present their module (in instructional form) to the composite group. The module should be related to and focused on an advanced tool and its industrial application. For example, response surface methodology, DOE applied to product design, process variable performance tolerancing, financial risk analysis, application of nonparametric statistics to industrial problems, EWMA control chart, Chi-Square chart, etc. Each candidate will be critiqued on their delivery, content, graphics, style, etc.

By end of the week long mentoring session, each candidate will have developed a personal assessment and development plan. Essentially, the plan guides the MBB candidate toward further skill development. In closing, it is worth noting that a certified Master Black Belt is fully capable of independent training and coaching of Black Belts, as well as providing strategic and tactical assistance to Champions and management during the course of implementation and deployment; therefore, great care and consideration should be given to those selected as candidates. Essentially, the MBB program represents an on-going career challenge for those selected. The intial week long mentoring process is just the first step on a never ending journey of personal and professional development.

Attachment A

With regards to the MBB selection process, it is fully recognized that finding ideal candidates is a very difficult and tedious process, as the MBB can be used in many different roles within the organization. To help guide the process of selection, I thought it would be most helpful to provide a listing of attributes and characteristics which describes the composite nature of a **model** Master Black Belt. In this manner, we can begin to see the role possibilities and what underlies the MBB mentoring process.

- *Black Belt certification*
- *A strong academic background of a technical nature*
- *Experienced, successful, and recognized in an array of job assignments*
- *Displays humility and the never ending desire to learn and grow*
- *Keen interest in industrial problem solving*
- *Strong interpersonal and communication skills*
- *Team player with competitive instincts*
- *Very strong leadership ability*
- *Believes in relationships and maintains a process focus*
- *Tactical as well as technical understanding of process improvement*
- *Commands respect among subordinates, peers, and superiors*
- *Significant instructional and facilitation experience*
- *A self perception which reflects the nature of a change agent*
- *Ability to "step out of the box" and try new things*
- *A believer in managed risk taking and shared reward*
- *Recognizes the role and importance of corporate politics*
- *Effective negotiation skills*
- *Knows the process of business and the meaning of customer focus*
- *Experienced with process and business metrics*
- *Knowledgeable and experienced in quantitative benchmarking practices*
- *Experienced in presentation and instructional materials development*
- *Understands the technical foundation of quantitative risk assessment*
- *Knows how to initiate and win an internal consulting contract*
- *Can establish valid success criteria for internal consulting contracts*
- *Good understanding of engineering tolerance analysis and optimization*
- *Strong computer skills (spreadsheet and statistical applications)*
- *Applies nonparametric methods and procedures when appropriate*
- *Understands fundamental management and business practices*
- *Knows how to perform organizational intervention*
- *Very comfortable with mathematical statistics and DOE*
- *Comfortable with survey design and analysis methods*
- *Knowledgeable about the organization and its products/services*
- *Maintains a strong sense of loyalty to the organization*
- *Is aware of and knowledgeable about best manufacturing practices*
- *Understands and strongly believes in the basic tenants of TQM, DFM, etc.*
- *Applies TQM, DFM, etc. to nonmanufacturing processes*
- *Enjoys the process of setting, selling, and achieving stretch goals*
- *Ability to work and talk with people at all levels of the organization*
- *Can speak the language of management and walk the talk of business*
- *Participates in strategic planning, implementation, and deployment*

The Master Black Belt mentoring process will provide a select number of individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to best guide, propagate, and mature the black belt infrastructure. The mentoring sessions will be primarily focused on application tactics with a secondary focus on tools. The intent is to present the MBB candidate with those methods and techniques (both technical and nontechnical) which best exploit the full power of advanced problem solving and process improvement tools.

Although the primary focus of the mentoring process is tactical in nature, several advanced improvement tools will be presented and thoroughly discussed from an application (as well as theoretical) point of view.