Within the field generally referred to as OpEx, there are various methods that can be applied to drive better business outcomes, including (but not limited to):

- Lean,
- Six Sigma,
- DMAIC,
- Total Quality Management,
- world class maintenance,
- business process reengineering,
- organizational change management,
- organizational effectiveness, etc.

Each methodology referenced on the left has demonstrated that, if applied properly, it can help to deliver value to the business and in some ways the distinctions among the various methods are arbitrary because they’re leveraging similar concepts and/or stem from a similar mindset. However, it’s important for the OpEx function to have a clear understanding as to which methods to apply for several reasons.

Before aligning on the right method or combination of methods, it’s important to have a clear OpEx vision and strategy. The vision and strategy combine to paint the picture for the outcomes that OpEx needs to achieve, which should drive the decision as to which methods to prioritize.

Once a method has been chosen, you’ll have to decide how the methods will be implemented and messaged to the enterprise. However, some organizations fully commit to a method to the point where the purpose of OpEx appears to be driving adherence to the method instead of improving performance.

### SAMPLE EXECUTION STEPS

1. Review the OpEx vision and strategy with an eye toward understanding which OpEx method or methods are best suited to helping the organization achieve the OpEx vision and strategy.

2. Consider factors that may affect which OpEx methods to apply, including the pursuit of external certifications, compliance with regulatory requirements, and which methods best align with your enterprise’s industry characteristics.

3. Analyze the current capabilities of the OpEx team to support the implementation of these methods. If there are capability gaps, decide how to best address them through training existing staff or hiring incremental staff.

### SAMPLE ASSESSMENT

1. Have you developed or updated within the last 12 months a compelling vision for OpEx aligned with the overall corporate vision?

2. Were employees within the OpEx function actively involved in developing/updating this vision?

3. Has the vision been socialized with key stakeholders, such as select business and operations leaders, and (if applicable) union leadership?