



KAF CIA
Bahnhofplatz
6300 Zug
Switzerland

kafcia@kafcia.org

RAISING AWARENESS OF THE KAIZEN™ METHODOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE KAF CIA OXFORD DEBATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The KAF CIA Oxford Debate Championships took place from October to November 2024, culminating on November 26 at WSB Merito University in Wrocław, Poland. Organized in partnership with NGO Fundacja Projekty Edukacyjne, WSB Merito University, and the city of Wrocław, the event was coordinated by Julia Walczyńska (Kaizen Institute Poland). The involvement of consultants from Kaizen Institute Poland and the Team from the NGO significantly enhanced the initiative's impact.

Context

Many educational settings lack practical frameworks for Continuous Improvement and sustainable thinking, with traditional curricula prioritizing academic performance over holistic, skill-based learning. This leaves students unprepared to manage modern complexities or make future-focused choices. The project addresses this gap by offering accessible tools and methodologies to help students and educators adopt habits of Continuous Improvement, sustainability, and responsible decision-making.

Setting Targets

- Raise young people's awareness of the KAIZEN™ philosophy, empowering them to plan their lives more effectively, enhance productivity at school, and identify inefficiencies in their daily routines.
- Strengthen their understanding of sustainable development, inspiring them to consider the long-term consequences of their actions.
- Cultivate essential soft skills that are often overlooked in traditional education, preparing them for future personal and professional success.



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Event Plan and Execution

This initiative utilized a blended approach, combining hands-on training in Continuous Improvement with the analytical rigor of Oxford-style debates. Through practical Daily KAIZEN™ workshops conducted at participating schools, students and teachers were introduced to the KAIZEN™ philosophy, providing them with a tangible framework for identifying and addressing inefficiencies in everyday life.

Methodologies Applied:

- **Daily KAIZEN™ Workshops:** Held before the championships, these sessions offered foundational knowledge on Continuous Improvement principles, encouraging participants to evaluate and improve their personal routines and learning environments.
- **Oxford Debate Format:** The final event employed a structured, proven debate format to enhance analytical thinking, persuasive communication, and collaborative problem-solving skills.
- **Expert Guidance:** Specialists from Kaizen Institute Poland and the Educational Projects Foundation provided expertise, ensuring participants could effectively translate theoretical concepts into practical application.

Testimonies

"It was remarkable to witness how the students not only grasped the core concepts of KAIZEN™ but actively applied them during the event. Throughout the debates, we could hear them referencing insights from the workshops—pinpointing inefficiencies, suggesting improvements, and reflecting on sustainability in their arguments. Seeing such concrete evidence of their learning and growth made it clear that this initiative had a tangible, positive impact. – Jakub Czajka, Board Member, NGO Fundacja Projekty Edukacyjne

"As a new joiner to this type of event it was great to see the passion and energy that each one of the different participants brought to the debates, together with an exceptional level of knowledge and expertise in demanding topics such as sustainability and KAIZEN™. It was sensational to see how the participants were able to rapidly learn about KAIZEN™ in the previously delivered workshops and use the foundations of the methodology to impact their arguments. It has been an exceptional experience that has demonstrated a positive impact on the awareness of KAIZEN™ in the younger generations." – Aleix Borrego, Managing Director, Kaizen Institute Poland



Outcomes & Learnings

Quantitative Outcomes:

- Eight schools from across Poland participated in the project.
- Ninety students attended the Daily KAIZEN™ workshops.
- Thirty-five students competed in the final Oxford Debate Championships at WSB Merito University.
- Around 100 participants, including students, teachers, and guests, attended the culminating event.

Qualitative Outcomes:

- Participants praised the clarity and practicality of the KAIZEN™ principles.
- Teachers observed increased student engagement, with learners actively identifying inefficiencies in their schoolwork and daily routines.
- Observers noted heightened enthusiasm, as participants displayed greater confidence, critical thinking, and empathy during the debates.

Key Insights:

- Students experienced the value of Continuous Improvement, learning how small adjustments in daily habits can lead to significant benefits.
- Educators recognized the potential of KAIZEN™ principles to complement traditional curricula by addressing organizational and time-management challenges.
- The debate format highlighted the importance of clear communication, teamwork, and respectful dialogue, fostering essential skills applicable beyond the classroom.



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Event Summary

The initiative fostered a culture of Continuous Improvement and trust, creating a replicable framework for workshops and debates that lays the groundwork for future projects and collaborations. It enhanced the NGO's capabilities in project organization, event management, and expert engagement, ensuring more efficient operations moving forward. By building stronger relationships with students, teachers, and local communities, the NGO established a solid foundation for ongoing cooperation and long-term sustainability. Ultimately, the project positioned the NGO as a leader in promoting progressive, skill-based education and sustainable learning strategies.

Future Collaborations

The success of this initiative demonstrates the transformative potential of integrating KAIZEN™ principles into education. By refining this approach and extending it to more schools and communities, Continuous Improvement practices can be implemented at every level. This would enhance traditional curricula while empowering future generations to become more adaptable, resourceful, and sustainability-focused, fostering a more resilient and innovative educational landscape.

For more details or collaboration inquiries, please contact kafcia@kafcia.org.

