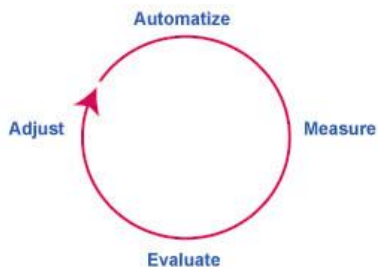


Kaizen Korner

Kaizen: A Japanese word for "change for the better" or "improvement"; the English translation is "continuous incremental improvement" or "continual improvement". In Chinese, Gai Shan means good change for the community; generating benefits for everyone.

How Far Can You Run in Five Minutes?



Kai = Good Zen = Change: Good Change or Good Way

Let's focus for the moment on "Measure". We want to see how good we are, and to find out if our changes, read: training, are effective. We need simple and direct tests. Here's one that works for endurance ability:

Run as fast as you can for five minutes. Measure the distance you ran. Its simple and direct!

Do several weeks of endurance training and then do your five minute run again. Did you go farther? That's it. You want this test to be reliable, so you have to do it in the same way each time you do it.

Ideally:

On a track; if not, over the same flat terrain each time.

At the same time of day; After a rest week. Yes, a rest week – more about that in a later column.

Don't have access to a track and tape measure? How about a bicycle computer? Or a pedometer?

Or just mark your stop point on the road with a spray can (discretely) – you'll know for sure if you pass this point next time that you are improving.

Calculate your Maximal Speed: Distance run /five minutes. The sports medicine guys use metres/hour. This test correlates very well with controlled tests on treadmills and with VO2Max measurements on treadmills. And we all know that big VO2Max means big performance.

If you go farther in five minutes, you'll go faster in your next Biathlon race.