



## ***A Study of Six Sigma Belts***

### ***A Comparison of UQMI Six Sigma Belts to Traditional American Style Martial Arts Belts***

The following information is intended to demonstrate how the Belt Colors of Traditional Martial Arts compares to those used within the United Quality Management Institute. It is based upon my personal Martial Arts journey as a 35 year practitioner and instructor. This is not intended to declare all belt colors be standardized within the Martial Arts world, since those colors are highly dependent upon the particular style being reviewed. However, this is intended to demonstrate the inconsistency seen within the Six Sigma profession, where I also hold Master Black Belt status from several different organizations.

In its original intent with the American Martial Arts, belt colors were seen as a means to recognize the time and skill levels present in an individual. As I began to grow myself in this world, I discovered a missing component; that of Values or Virtues! In addition, I began to question how someone could progress to a higher level in belt. Initially, I was taught that promotions could only come from the highest ranking instructor within the school (or Dojo). However, later I met a very knowledgeable instructor (who was also a Black Belt) that taught me about the structure of the Family within each style. This was to become the beginning of my journey that would address Martial Arts Ranks.

Within the Family was the eldest, with additional Family Members that would follow in line based upon their position within the Family. So, during my journey, I wanted to know what was considered a Family. Was it biological or associational? I later learned that, at least in the United States, it was considered Organizational. So, how could I form that Organization? That would come around to be based upon an independent peer review from other Families or Organizations. This starts with a declaration of the Founder or Soke of the Name (Style) of the Family. This individual would determine the Family Structure. This is not a Belt, but a position. So, how did individuals receive Belts? This would depend upon how the Soke intended the Family to behave.

While at the same time, I was also taking my journey into the world of Lean Six Sigma. Here, the same question kept arising. Who can teach a particular topic? Who could promote to a level? I have always been of belief that "Taking Is Not Teaching". In other words, taking a Green Belt course does not qualify someone to teach Green Belts, nor would a Black Belt teach and promote another Black Belt. If I took a psychology class in college, am I qualified/certified to teach that class? Probably not! But the road to Lean Six Sigma training and certification is neither well understood nor standardized.

Just as we see in this comparison of the two organizations, the teaching delivery method is reviewed (accredited), mastery of the skill requires testing (practicals), certifications require a demonstration of successful application of the skills (the project).



# The United Quality Management Institute

*Promoting PEOPLE – PROCESS – PERFORMANCE Skills*

## A TYPICAL MARTIAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

BELT - RANK or POSITION	VIRTUE	DESIGNATION
White (10th kyu)	Humanity	Student Rank
Yellow (9 <sup>th</sup> kyu)	Honor	Student Rank
Gold (8 <sup>th</sup> kyu)	Courage	Student Rank
Orange (7th kyu)	Courtesy	Student Rank
Green (6 <sup>th</sup> kyu)	Trust	Student Rank
Purple (5 <sup>th</sup> kyu)	Kindness	Student Rank
Blue (4 <sup>th</sup> kyu)	Knowledge	Student Rank
Red (3 <sup>rd</sup> kyu)	Wisdom	Student Rank
Brown (2 <sup>nd</sup> kyu)	Loyalty	Student Rank
Black (1 <sup>st</sup> Dan or Shodan)		Master Rank
Black (2 <sup>nd</sup> Dan or Nidan)	Typically starts teaching	Master Rank - Sensei
Black (3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan or Sandan)		Master Rank
Black (4 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Yondan)		Master Rank
Black (5 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Godan)		Master Rank
Black (6 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Rokudan)		Master Rank
Black (7 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Shichidan)		Master Rank
Black (8 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Hachidan)		Master Rank
Black (9 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Kudan)		Master Rank
Black (10 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Judan)		Master Rank
Dan Board (Peer Review)		Master Rank
Soke-Dai		The Elder's Son
Soke (Founder or Father)		Founder or Father (The Elder)



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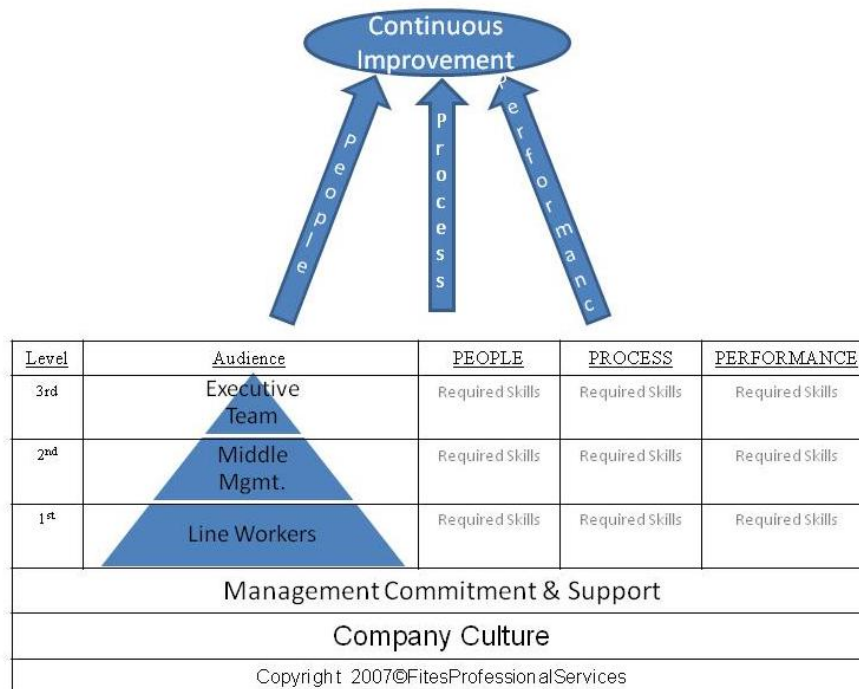
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## The UNITED QUALITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

### SIX SIGMA CERTIFICATION STRUCTURE

BELT - RANK or POSITION	VIRTUE	DESIGNATION
White (10th kyu)	This field is replaced with Interpersonal Skills and would be reflected in the PEOPLE branch of the 3-P Training Matrix. Examples would include: Delegation, Conflict Resolution, Personality Behavior, Communication, Team Building, etc. at the appropriate level for the target audience.	Student Rank
Yellow (9 <sup>th</sup> kyu)		Student Rank
Green (6 <sup>th</sup> kyu)		Student Rank
Black (1 <sup>st</sup> Dan or Shodan)		Advanced Rank
Black (2 <sup>nd</sup> Dan or Nidan)		Advanced Rank - Sensei
Black (3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan or Sandan)		Master Rank
Black (4 <sup>th</sup> Dan or Yondan)		Grand Master Rank
Dan Board (Peer Review)		UQMI Board of Directors

## The 3-P TRAINING MATRIX: A Blended Model for Successful Continuous Improvement



In Conclusion: The Board of Directors for the UQMI serve as neutral, unbiased third party certification body (similar to the Dan Board). They bring a variety of background, skills and experience that makes them uniquely qualified to review and approve certifications in a variety of disciplines that support Lean Six Sigma and ancillary skills. It is my hope that this model helps to explain and attempt to standardize a powerful improvement methodology.