

Improvement Initiatives

"Change – for the better!"

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FREE NEWSLETTER

April 2010



For Earth Day: Lean Green and World-class?

by Jay Watson

"Lean Green" is the result of decades of experiences and best practices of industry and government. Subject Matter Experts in Lean manufacturing and Green business practices from HP, IBM, GE, and the EPA, among others, all have their version of Lean and Green practices. The goal of "Lean Green" is simple – assist an organization in defining and reaching their environmental and sustainability goals using "Lean-based" tools.

According to a recent (2007) **IW/ MPI** Census of Manufacturers, nearly 70% (69.6%) of all plants have adopted lean manufacturing as an improvement methodology. What's more, lean is more than twice as popular as the next closest improvement method, Total Quality Management (34.2%).

Nevertheless, just because something is popular doesn't necessarily mean it's working according to plan, and part of the reason is that manufacturers have a wide variety of expectations when it comes to lean. Most companies believe that lean's main benefits come from cutting costs, but that's a mistaken perception, observes

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The lean revolution is clearly underway within U.S.

Manufacturing companies, although the jury is still out on what exactly the end result of a lean initiative ought to be.

Don't Dismiss D-M-A-I-C !

(as just another pretty phase) Part 2 of 2

D and M covered in Feb 2010 issue...

The **Analyze** phase focuses on searching for the root cause of the problem. Based on data analysis,

opportunities are prioritized according to their contribution to customer satisfaction and impact on profitability. Tools include: various tests for Statistical Analyses, Pareto analyses, Cause and Effect diagram, and Failure Mode Effects and Criticality Analysis.

The **Improve** phase consists of developing solutions and selecting the optimum solutions for best results and most robust performance. Two key aspects of the Improve phase include the use of a Corrective Action Item Matrix (CAM) and change management.

In the relation symbolized by $Q = A \times E$:
The quality of the solution is ...

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Green Light for Green Collar Jobs

Green-collar workers -- who include everyone from energy-efficiency consultants to wastewater plant operators -- constitute a tiny but fast-growing segment of the U.S. economy, according to a study published by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

About 80 percent of venture capital investments in 2008 were in the clean energy and energy efficiency sector, broadly known as "cleantech." And, while cleantech slumped with overall venture capital in the first quarter of 2009, the sector outperformed telecommunications, media and other sectors, according to an analysis of Thompson Reuters data by PricewaterhouseCoopers and the National Venture Capital Association.

Learn more at:

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2009/06/10/10greenwire-green-jobs-sector-poised-for-explosive-growth-63481.html>



World-class? (continued from page 1)

James Womack, founder of the Lean Enterprise Institute. "Lean management is not a quick solution for cost reduction," he points out. "It's a fundamentally different system than traditional management for organizing and managing employees, suppliers, customer relationships, product development, production, and the overall enterprise."

Be that as it may, cost reduction strategies are on the rise, with the number of companies focusing on "low cost" up 1.9% from last year. The only other area seeing a bigger gain is "high quality." Conversely, product development strategies are somewhat on the wane, with focus on "product variety" down 2.8%, "customization" off 2.3% and "innovation" down 0.3%.

Continuous improvement programs continue to be the most frequently cited strategic practice, with 76.9% of the respondents,

up 4% from a year ago. Not surprisingly, given the increasing awareness of "green manufacturing," environmental management practices saw the biggest percentage increase, up 11.2% from 2006. Energy management also saw a sizable increase in usage, being up 9.4%. A new option this year, recycling and reuse programs, finished comfortably in second place, at 56.1%. The percentage of companies saying they have either made "significant progress" toward or have "fully achieved" world-class status remains unchanged from last year -- 26.1%. However, an additional 6.8% of the companies report having made at least "some progress" in their quest to become world-class, leaving only 12.8% of the companies as saying they've made no progress at all. All told, 87.2% of the manufacturers in the United States are at the very least aware of what represents world-class for their industries, and are aware of what it'll take to get there.

Turn the Org Chart Upside Down!

Excerpt from the book: Good To Great, Jim Collins, HarperCollins publishing, 2001

Some of the greatest organizations today have turned themselves upside down. They have found that the old top-down pyramid style management structure doesn't work. Progressive companies have flipped the pyramid over, giving employees more say in what goes on. Some organizations call it "participative management" others call it "employee involvement" and Toyota calls it "respect for people" which is at the core of the Toyota Production System. And it works, as evidenced in improved morale, productivity, safety, quality, efficiency, delivery, and customer satisfaction.

Interested in inverting the pyramid in your operation? Here's some helpful tips:

- Engage employees to find better, safer, easier ways to do their jobs. You will be pleasantly surprised at how valuable some of the suggestions are.
- Employees from all levels of the organization should provide ideas not just those who have direct involvement. Sometimes the greatest ideas come from unlikely sources.
- Treat employees with dignity, respect, and honesty. Explain the reasons that underlie a decision or policy. Leaders that convey organizational

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Hey, What's the Big Ikea? (aka: Who Moved My Cheese?)

www.time.com - search w/ keyword **IKEA**



Swedish furniture giant Ikea has swapped its signature Futura font for the more Web-friendly Verdana, leading fans of design and affordable coffee tables everywhere to take to the Internet in outrage!

'Who Moved My Cheese? is the story of four characters living in a "Maze" who face unexpected change when they discover their "Cheese" has disappeared. Sniff and Scurry, who are mice, and Hem and Haw, little people the size of mice, each adapt to change in their "Maze" differently. In fact, one doesn't adapt at all...

This timeless allegory reveals profound truths to individuals and organizations dealing with change. We each live in a "Maze," a metaphor for the companies or organizations we work with, the communities we live in, the families we love places where we look for the things we want in life, "Cheese." It may be an enjoyable career, loving relationships, wealth, or spiritual peace of mind. With time and experience, one character eventually succeeds and even prospers from the change in his "Maze." In an effort to share what he has learned along the way, he records his personal discoveries on the maze walls, the "Handwriting on the Wall." Likewise, when we begin to see the "writing on the wall," we discover the simplicity and necessity of adapting to change. Full of modern day insight, the story of Who Moved My Cheese? invites

individuals and organizations to enjoy less stress and more success by learning to deal with the inevitable change.



Change Happens
They Keep Moving The Cheese
Anticipate Change
Get Ready For The Cheese To Move
Monitor Change
Smell The Cheese Often So You Know When It Is Getting Old
Adapt To Change Quickly
The Quicker You Let Go Of Old Cheese, The Sooner You Can Enjoy New Cheese
Change
Move With The Cheese
Enjoy Change!
Savor The Adventure And Enjoy The Taste Of New Cheese!
Be Ready To Change Quickly and Enjoy It Again & Again
They Keep Moving The Cheese.

Beat da Summer

Time Blues ...

- Close draperies on the sunny side of the house to block the sun's rays.
- Use light colors to reflect heat and reduce cooling costs, when painting your home or replacing the roof.
- Plant deciduous trees to add shade in summer and let the sun through in the winter
- Plant small shrubbery near the foundation of your home to shade the lower half of outer walls. Plant three feet from the wall to prevent water damage.
- Use fans to circulate air and make you feel cooler at a higher thermostat setting.
- Do moisture-producing chores in the early morning or at night when it's cooler. This includes washing clothes or dishes, mopping floors, watering indoor plants, etc.

Keep Ol' Man

Winter Out ...

- If your home has a fireplace, close the damper tightly when the fireplace is not in use.
- Caulk your home's doors and windows.
- Weather strip doors to unheated/uncooled areas of your home such as the garage, crawl space, or attic.

You're fired!



Photo -Brad Burket, Getty Images

The Donald ...

has let more people go than Jack Welch at GE. (well, not quite...)

Have you been fired or laid off and want to tell the tale? Submit your rants, raves and funny stories here! You can also vote and comment on your favorite Fired Stories.

Check out: www.simplyfired.com

If you don't laugh, you'll cry!

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a product of the acceptance of the solution as well as its technical expertise in solving the problem.

The **Control** phase is utilized once the improvement is realized. The basic idea is to sustain the gain through control and response plans. Typical tools such as control charts and run charts may be utilized, along with mistake proofing.

The DMAIC process in summary:

- **Define:** Understand process to be improved and set a goal.
- **Measure:** Validate the current state.
- **Analyze:** a) Develop cause-and-effect theories of what may be causing the problem; b) Search for the real causes of the problem and scientifically prove the cause-and-effect linkage
- **Improve:** Take action.
- **Control:** a) Measure to verify improvement has taken place; b) Take action to sustain the gain.



Org Chart Upside Down (cont. from page 2)

clarity (what & why) and seek employee input (how) tap into something very powerful.

- Empower employees. Spread authority around. If the largest part of the pyramid is at the top, then the top people should have more authority. Don't sugar coat and dictate but rather, engage and collaborate.

Did you know, it's not uncommon for employees at Toyota or Johnson Controls who see a problem to shut down the whole assembly line until the problem is resolved? By giving employees more control and more involvement in their work environment, you tap into a valuable source of ideas that fuels continuous improvement efforts and enables organizations to grow and prosper.

Off the Page...

Stress Management: Tips to Reduce Your Stress at Work

<http://www.resumark.com>

People worry about all sorts of things at work - making sales goals, increasing competition, hiring new employees, outsourcing jobs to other countries, [layoffs](#), budget cuts, [immigration reform](#), [working for an idiot boss](#), [what gift to get a co-worker for holidays](#), etc.

Some amount of stress is good. It motivates us and makes us stronger. Too much stress is bad. It can cause severe health problems and, in extreme cases, even death.

There are certain things you can do to reduce your stress:

- 1. Take care of yourself.** Start paying attention to your physical and emotional health. Get enough sleep, start going to the health club, choose food that keeps you going and makes you feel good.
- 2. Stay away from conflicts.** Try to avoid people that are hard to get along with and those who don't work well with others. Don't gossip, don't share your opinions about co-workers and don't tell too much personal things about yourself.
- 3. Prioritize and organize.** You can reduce job stress by prioritizing and organizing your responsibilities. Leave on-time in the morning, maybe even earlier. You don't want to stress yourself by running late. Plan your day in advance: analyze your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks, avoid scheduling too much tasks in one day, plan regular breaks. Prioritize tasks and start from the more important ones.
- 4. Delegate responsibility.** You can probably delegate certain work to your co-workers. If other people can take care of it, why not let them?
- 5. Say "Bye" to bad habits.** Do you stress yourself by running late every day or cannot find an important document on your desk because it is a mess? Or maybe you set unrealistic goals for yourself? Do something about it! Set your watches fast and give yourself extra time and organize your work place. Do your best and you'll see the results.
- 6. Forget multitasking.** If you have too much stress, don't multitask. Do one thing at a time. Otherwise you can get even more overwhelmed by doing a few things at a time.
- 7. Improve emotional intelligence.** The more control you have over your emotions, the more stress you

can avoid in the workplace. We need to learn and develop the ability to control the emotions and behaviors (self-management), the ability to connect to others and manage conflicts (relationship management) and the ability to understand and react to other's emotions (social awareness).

8. Relax and breathe deeply. Studies prove that simply learning how to breathe correctly can increase energy, improve blood circulation and reduced swelling. Deep breathing is one of the best ways to lower stress in the body. This is because when you breathe deeply it sends a message to your brain to calm down and relax.

9. Take a long vacation - it's a great way to relax and recharge. Forget about the problems and enjoy yourself.

Remember, there are some things that just aren't worth worrying about and there are some things you just can't change. Don't waste your time on them.