

## Wednesday's Words of Quality

As you know, we employ a defined process, shown below, for making effective worker-driven change resulting in thousands of improvements here in the Lean laboratory culture of the Henry Ford Production System.

[illegible]

One of the insights I received over dinner last year was from Professor Jeffrey Liker who recommended to me the book Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman, the Nobel prize winner in economics. In it, Kahneman describes the concept of 2 systems in the mind that relate to different modes of thinking.

Professor Kahneman elaborates on these thinking systems thusly:

Humans love to do this- shooting fast from the hip, so to speak, or reacting before they recognize or understand. This may lead to imperfect actions and solutions. Therefore, the rapid fix in our problem solving process may not address the underlying cause of the problem long-term or at all. You will know that when the problem recurs.

Yet for some problems, this quick approach is quite appropriate. I believe that Malcolm Gladwell entertainingly described this method of rapid assessment well in his popular book, Blink. The Power of Thinking Without Thinking.

*"System 2 allocates attention to the effortful mental activities that demand it, including complex computations. The operations of System 2 are often associated with the subjective experience of agency, choice, and concentration."*

This more detailed, slower thinking of System 2 is required for PDCA problem solving as this requires significantly more time investment, collaboration and mental effort. Problem solving in this manner is hard work.

This concept of thinking systems of the mind also lends insight into why the PDCA approach to problem solving is unnaturally hard work and perhaps why it doesn't sustain often without cultural and managerial drivers and accountability incentives.

Just food for thought and two book recommendations for your bedside table. If you've got a short attention span, start with the 2nd one ;)

#### References:

1. Kahneman Daniel: Thinking, Fast and Slow. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011.
2. Gladwell, Malcolm: Blink. The Power of Thinking Without Thinking. New York: Little, Brown & Co, 2005.