

At your request I will be attaching the 2020 series of WWQ as printable versions for your communication or huddles boards as opportunity to share knowledge with your team members.

-Richard Zarbo, MD

Wednesday's Words of Quality

Lesson #2

Manager's Lean Journey

The Ford Models A, B, C.....and then came T

We all readily recognize the successful Ford Model T car that afforded common man entry to the new world of automobile transportation. However, the T was preceded by an alphabet of precursors including the very successful Model N. Never heard of that one, right? You can see the entire collection of pre-Model T Fords, the so-called alphabet cars, from the Larry Porter Alphabet Ford collection at the birthplace of the Ford Model T, the Ford Piquette Avenue Plant in Detroit.

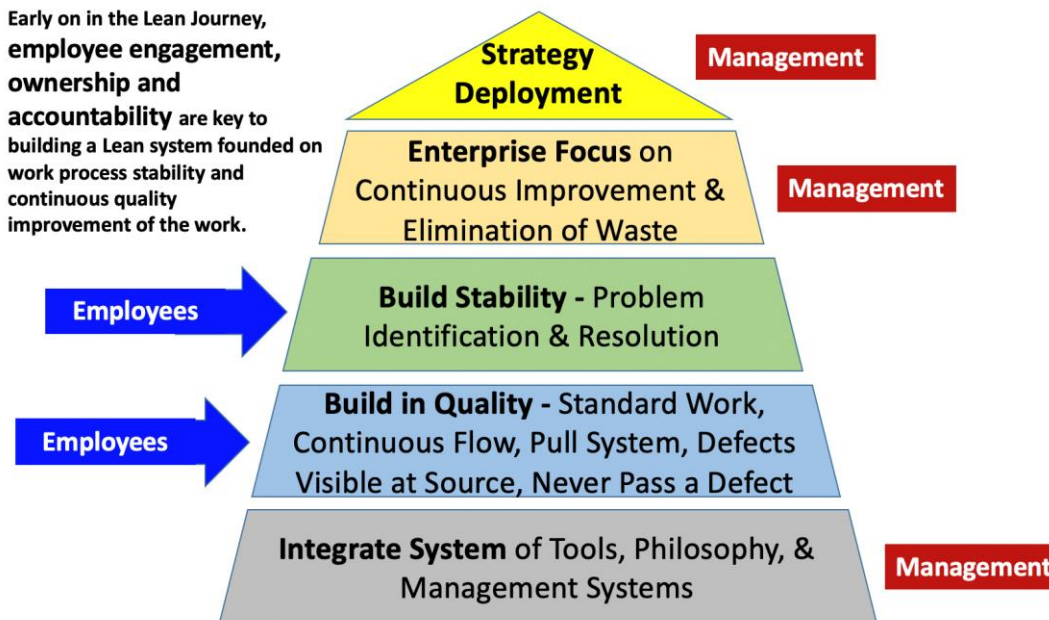


Lean Models for Continuous Improvement

There are many parallels of the Lean method of step-wise improvements toward the target condition using data (Plan-Do-Check-Act) and constancy of purpose resulting in the Model T. Henry Ford's approach of iterative improvements to a sound design beginning with the 1903 Model A and culminating in eventual success of the Model T is very similar to our own continuous improvement approach to "relentlessly pursuing perfection" by using knowledge of sound work principles and Lean skills and "tools" to redesign our processes. The Lean journey takes investment of your time in education and creating the Lean systems to support the new way of working toward continuous improvement. Your understanding and successes will be iterative as well. You will learn from your failures. Continuous improvement is our constancy of purpose so never quit. Every day, do something.

The Lean Continuous Improvement Journey

Early on in the Lean Journey, **employee engagement, ownership and accountability** are key to building a Lean system founded on work process stability and continuous quality improvement of the work.



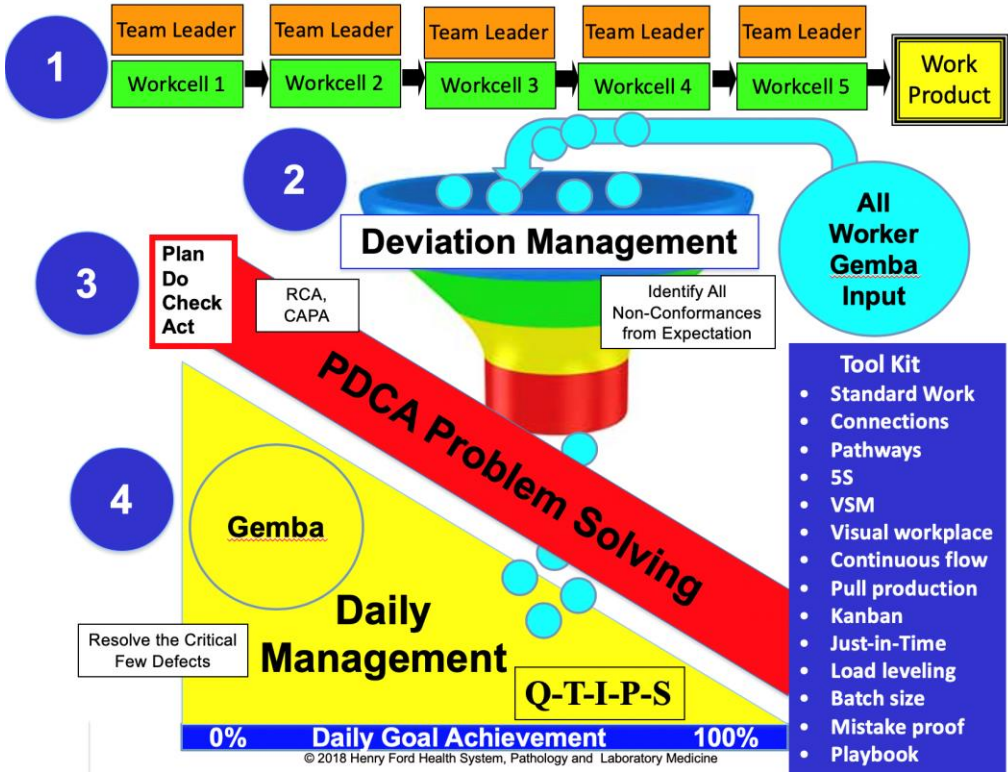
4 Key Lean Management SubSystems for Effective Implementation

Numerous work and management systems have been created over the past 15 years to sustain our Lean culture of continuous improvement in in order to “relentlessly pursue perfection.” These include 4 key management subsystems that create structure for consistent behaviors that enable continuous improvement and create process stability at the level of the work.

These are diagrammed in the figure below as 1) Team Leader System; 2) Deviation Management System; 3) Improvement Management System (PDCA); and 4) Daily Management System. Each is integral to a highly functioning Lean system.

Note, the Tool Kit is only consistently functional in the hands of trained carpenters who follow the Lean discipline defined by the systems to solve problems. In any organization, progress toward goal achievement can come from above through major executive directed change initiatives and technologic innovations.

But progress toward daily goal achievement must come from below at the level of the actual work (gemba) by managers and teams who are empowered and accountable to understand and improve the quality of their work product or service.



Culture of Continuous Improvement

A successful Lean culture of continuous improvement is a work environment in which the leader can walk away and empowered employees can sustain themselves in pursuing higher quality targets by implementing continuous process improvements. As Henry Ford once said, “Quality is doing it right when no one is looking.” Sounds like a manager’s dream, doesn’t it?

If culture is the key, getting started shows good intent but it is said that culture change takes about a decade to establish. Do not be frustrated. Lean success takes time, so to consider Lean as a short-term solution to an acute management crisis would be misguided.

As we shared in the Lean Silver certification training, there are 3 foundational pillars you must establish and support in order to create a functional Lean system that empowers employees to own the quality of their work.

The 1st pillar is Lean education of yourself and your team in what defines good work and what redesign approaches (Lean tools) can be applied to improve the quality and the flow of the work.

The 2nd pillar is adopting the Lean philosophy of aligning your work with knowledge of what the customer wants and needs (and does not want), creating a blameless culture, developing, recognizing and trusting those that do the work as expert and engaging them in work improvements at the level of the actual work.

The 3rd pillar is creating and implementing quality management subsystems that support expected employee behaviors for continuous improvement and managerial consistency of execution.

Culture in its most simplified definition is how people are incentivized to behave

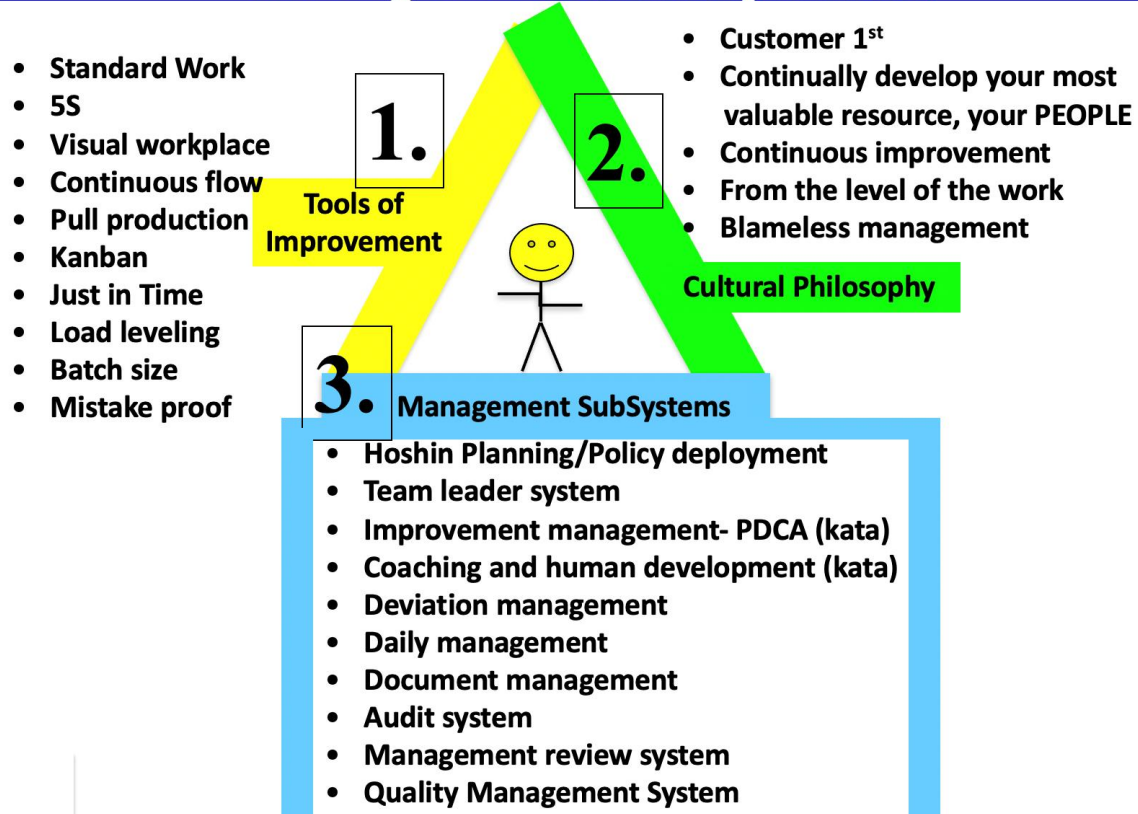
and the way people think, talk, work, and act every day. Like any corporate culture, Lean behavior is a culture based on a philosophy and supported by a management system and structures that allow the desired behaviors to take place consistently.

These are the philosophy and management principles of Deming that foster respect for people and human development, and allow for a culture of respected, empowered, and accountable employees who are recognized for their expertise and knowledge.

People development is extremely important as a differentiator of Lean success. This defines the desired culture of continuous improvement wherein employees (1) are in charge of their own jobs, (2) design their own standardized work, and (3) are authorized to make changes to improve the work.

In a Lean culture, quality is based on the pillars of respect for and development of people who are responsible for the continuous improvement. This is the basis for creating a culture of continuous improvement and change that sees quality as more than a desirable outcome but as the foundation of a business strategy to remain competitive. The success of this strategy is obvious when comparing organizations in which continuous quality improvement is at their core.

Structural Pillars to Succeed Management SubSystems



As manager, you are the chief carpenter, knowledgeable in proper use of tools and armed with the structural plans and systems to expertly build your customized house of continuous improvement while providing guidance and coordination to your team. Your trusting customers anxiously await your finished product with anticipation of a great outcome.

Next WWQ: Lesson #3 - Role of the Manager/Supervisor in a Continuous Improvement Culture