

# LEAN PROGRESS

Ideas for helping your company transition to lean effectively and rapidly.

LEAN LEARNING CENTER

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## Leading Lean: The Personal Improvement Journey

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While it is frequently cited that lean leaders must be committed learners, most of the focus of lean transformations deal with the tools and systems to improve business processes. Very little energy is spent in learning how we can be more effective leaders to promote the change that we want to see. Even more problematic, when we do take on leadership effectiveness, typically we race right past the current reality of our innate leadership tendencies and instead focus on an ideal set of leadership traits that we all hope to embody.

The reality is that any organization's lean transformation is only as good as the people that are leading it. The adoption of lean must be seen as both an organizational journey and a personal one. Personal growth and leadership development should be addressed with the same priority as learning the lean tool kit, for example. This is certainly in concert with the principle of "create a learning organization" which promotes learning, reflection, and improvement not only for the organization, but for the sake of self-improvement as well.

With thousands of books, conferences, and products on the market, where is a good place to start the self-improvement journey? When asked the question on how to improve a process, the answer is to first deeply observe the current reality. Drawing on this analogy, the logical best first step is to understand your own current reality. For example, how are you seen as a leader? How do you react to certain environmental circumstances? How do you filter information, through what you are told or through facts and data?

There are many tools and self-assessments that help to begin to understand your unique current reality as a person, team member, and leader. Truly any tool that deepens your understand-

ing of your personal style can be of great benefit and help you grow in the personal domain. One time tested tool that serves as a great example is the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator.

The Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was developed over 50 years ago and is administered over 2 million times annually. With the correct understanding of the tool and its applications, it can be a powerful insight into how you respond to the environment around you. Without getting deep into how the tool works, the MBTI asks a series of questions which probe the extent to which the user is introverted vs. extroverted, sensing vs. intuitive, thinking vs. feeling, and perceiving vs. judging. (A wealth of informa-



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**“WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF YOUR LIFE, THE UNDERSTANDING OF TYPE CAN MAKE YOUR PERCEPTIONS CLEARER, YOUR JUDGMENTS SOUNDER, AND YOUR LIFE CLOSER TO YOUR HEART’S DESIRE.”**

**-ISABELLA BRIGGS MYERS**

tion regarding the MBTI, including an on-line version of the instrument, can be found at [www.mbticomplete.com](http://www.mbticomplete.com)).

A personality type emerges from the answers to these questions which provide potentially deep insights into how the user is naturally wired to respond to events and conditions on a routine basis. Understanding the meaning of these personality types is beyond the scope of this article, and a tremendous amount of literature exists on the Meyers-Briggs website. The following tables are a brief description of the different personality indicators:

**Extroversion (E) – Introversion (I)**

The Extroversion or Introversion dimension is called an “Attitude” and reveals the person’s preferred source of “life energy”.

**Extroversion (E)**

Extrovert’s energy and attention is primarily directed outward toward people and events in their external environment. An Extroverted person typically is aware of and relies on the environment for stimulation and guidance, is eager to interact with the outer world, is action-oriented and sometimes impulsive, is open to new experiences, easily communicates and socializes, and often desires to “talk things out”.

**Introversion (I)**

Introvert’s energy is primarily directed inwardly toward thoughts, reflections and experiences in their inner environment. An Introverted person typically has an interest in the clarity of concepts, ideas, and recollected experience, uses a thoughtful and contemplative detachment, enjoys solitude and privacy, and desires to “think things out” before talking about them.

**Judging (J) – Perceiving (P)**

**Judging (J)**

Those preferring a Judging orientation to the outer world display and use their Judging function (either F or T) when in the extroverted world to appraise or evaluate the information they have gathered. The Judging orientation is concerned with making decisions, seeking closure, planning operations, or organizing activities.

**Perceiving (P)**

Those preferring a Perceiving orientation to the outer world display and use their Perceiving function (either S or N) most when in the extroverted world to attune to and gather incoming information. The Perceiving orientation is attuned to incoming information. People preferring the Perceiving orientation in the outer world are viewed as spontaneous, curious, adaptable, and open to what is new and changeable.

**Sensing (S) – Intuition (N)**

These are the two “Perceiving Functions” – identifying a person’s preferred way to attune to and gather incoming information.

**Sensing (S)**

Sensing refers to perceptions observable by way of the five senses and used to establish what exists. Persons oriented toward Sensing are often very aware of the present moment, are realists, are very observant, and have excellent memory of past and present experiences / situations. Persons oriented toward Sensing can be so focused on observing and experiencing the present moment that they do not focus on future possibilities.

**Intuition (N)**

Intuition refers to perception of possibilities, meanings, and relationships by way of insight. Persons oriented toward Intuition may often experience ideas, discoveries, or “hunches” about patterns in seemingly unrelated events and about possible future events and scenarios. Persons preferring Intuition are often imaginative, theoretical, abstract, future oriented, original, and creative. Intuitives may also become so intent on possibilities that they overlook actualities.

**Feeling (F) – Thinking (T)**

**Feeling (F)**

Feeling refers to the preference to come to decisions by weighing relative values and merits of issues. Feeling is more subjective than thinking because it relies on an ability to understand personal and group values. Persons preferring Feeling tend to anticipate and take into account the effect of decisions on the people involved and on what is important to them. Those preferring Feeling are concerned with the human rather than the technical aspects of problems. They desire affiliation, warmth, harmony, and a time orientation that includes preservation of enduring values.

**Thinking (T)**

Thinking refers to the preference to reach decisions by linking ideas together through logical, cause -and-effect connections. Those preferring Thinking rely on an ability to be impartial and neutral with respect to the personal desires and values of both the decision maker and the people who may be affected by the decision. A preference for Thinking is often associated with an analytical inclination, objectivity, concern with principles of justice and fairness, criticality, an impassive and dispassionate demeanor, and an orientation to time that is linear and concerned with connections from the past through the present and toward the future.

Regardless of your type as described by the questionnaire, there are a few key points that are critical to keep in mind as you use the tool to increase your effectiveness in working with others:

1. It is almost certain that on any given day you will be interacting with people that perceive the environment and process information differently than you do. This doesn't make any style wrong or right, but it is possible that two different people are seeing two different pictures when looking at the same set of information.
2. This fact leads to the second key point which is diversity of personality types on a team means better thinking, but it does require more effort to work together as a team. The tendency may be to judge others views, rather than see them as necessary to understand a more holistic picture.
3. When looking at your style, what gaps do you see in how you process your environment and relate to others? What might you be missing? How can you close those gaps, or at least mitigate circumstances to which you may be blind?

Almost all leadership development research arrives at the same conclusion that self-awareness of the way in which impact others is critical. The Myers Briggs is but one diagnostic tool to help gain this self-awareness and improve influencing our environment. There are many other great tools which you may have used. The key is to make sure that the self-improvement path is being pursued alongside your organization's lean journey. Failure to do so will ultimately constrain any lean transformation. After all, as leaders we must become the change that we want to see.



## Lean Learning Center Continues to Grow, Adds Consultant Jim Sonderman

**JIM SONDERMAN BRINGS AN EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND IN APPLYING LEAN TECHNIQUES TO THE LEAN LEARNING CENTER TEAM.**

Jim Sonderman has been hired as a lean consultant and coach for the Lean Learning Center. His background encompasses 18 years of experience in the automotive industry with General Motors and Delphi. He spent approximately 9 years in management and 9 years in direct continuous improvement roles supporting the lean transformation of the company.

Jim was exposed to lean systems early in his career while working closely with Toyota as a parts supplier to the Georgetown, Kentucky and NUMMI assembly plants. He was recognized as an early adopter of

lean thinking and was selected to aid in the development of the Delphi Manufacturing System. He served several years as a Kaizen Leader in the plant driving excellence in manufacturing through leading kaizen events. During his career he spent 2 years at the Delphi World Headquarters as a manufacturing systems advisor supporting the lean education and training of top leadership. Throughout this appointment he chaired the Operational Availability Circle of Colleagues and led in the development and dissemination of Total Productive Maintenance strategies globally. He spent the last four years of his career in automotive as a technical

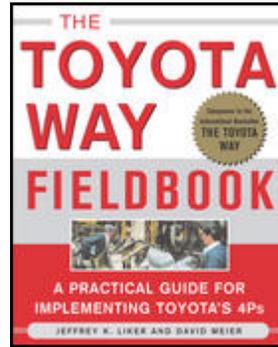
manager in the Delphi Supplier Development Organization coaching and assisting suppliers in his or her own lean transformation.

Jim is a Dayton, Ohio native and a graduate of the Ohio State University. He currently resides in Lake Orion, Michigan with his wife Michelle and daughter Samantha.





## Lean Book Review



**Authors:** Jeffrey Liker, David Meier

**Book Description: What's the key message?**

While Jeffrey Liker's book *The Toyota Way* was an examination of the 14 Principles of the Toyota Way, it was not an explicit "how to" guide at a tactical level. This follow up book is intended as the more practical guide to *Becoming Lean* (to borrow the title of an earlier book written by Liker). The *Fieldbook* is organized in the framework of Toyota's 4 P's:

- Philosophy
- Process
- People and Partners
- Problem Solving

The book starts first with "philosophy," not lean tools. It develops an important relationship between the two. The book, in its entirety, emphasizes that copying Toyota tools, regardless of how thoroughly, is not enough to become lean. Early chapters talk about defining your company's purpose and philosophy, providing many examples of Toyota's purpose and unique view of their place in society and the world. From there, the *Fieldbook* guides you through a reasonable progression of lean topics and methods to work with in your own company.

While there is no simple linear progression through a lean transformation, the authors address the challenge well in structuring the flow of the book. Typical "early" stages of lean learning and implementation are covered first, including learning how to identify waste, establishing process stability, and developing flow. The book spends more time on organizational culture and management methods, as opposed to tools. The book remains practical and actionable, rather than theoretical.

A strong central portion of the book focuses on developing leaders, how to lead in a lean environment, and how to develop "exceptional" employees. One particular highlight are the detailed examples, including a breakdown of the roles of Group Leaders, Team Leaders, and Team Members in a lean setting, not covered in most lean books.

The book recognizes that companies are not Toyota as a starting point. Rather, they are trying to become a Toyota-like lean organization. There is a chapter on respecting suppliers and managing them as Toyota does. The last sections of the book cover Toyota problem solving and implementation strategies, including a discussion of the pros and cons of different common lean transformation or implementation approaches, including kaizen events and the development of a "Company Production System."

**How does it contribute to the lean knowledge base?**

This book is a unique compilation of Toyota Production System methods, concepts, and philosophies. There are many adaptable examples of Toyota tools and methods, including Standard Work Combination tables, Cross Training matrices, 5 Why's problem solving analysis, and A3 reports. There are many new case study examples in the book that will be helpful, even to an experienced lean practitioner.

The book is also unique in that it is co-authored by a former Toyota team leader, an American, as opposed to reading an older book by Toyota executive Taiichi Ohno or consultant Shigeo Shingo.

**What are the highlights? What works?**

The book is very readable and easy to understand. Its layout and format borrows many of the good practices of the "For Dummies" series. You might consider this to be a "Toyota Production System For Dummies" book. There are many callouts with icons indicating "Tips" and "Traps" to look out for in your own lean implementation, to help avoid common lean implementation mistakes or failure modes.

This is very helpful, as the authors realize that it can be difficult work implementing lean. They never talk down to you or make you feel bad that you might struggle with the Toyota Way in your own environ-

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ment, because you are not Toyota.

Furthermore, co-author David Meier was a group leader at Toyota. Many perspectives on Toyota come from the process or industrial engineering perspective, but the perspective of front-line supervisor is of significant value and often overlooked.

#### **What are the weaknesses? What's missing?**

While this is clearly a field book in its application focus, it is less clear how it is connected to companion book, *The Toyota Way*. The 14 principles of that book are mentioned briefly but are not

integrated into this book. The Fieldbook has value as a stand-alone volume, but those looking for a specific companion to *The Toyota Way* will be disappointed.

You might be surprised to not find much information about Kanban, a process made famous by Toyota. Although the concept of pull is covered, there is no chapter on Kanban or examples of calculations or Kanban cards. Thankfully, there are many references and other books available on this topic.

#### **How should I read this to get the most out of it?**

The book can be read straight through. For an experienced lean practitioner, it can easily be used as a reference book. Topics are well organized and tools are easy to find with a well-documented index. For example, if you want an example of an A3 Report, you will find many pages of explanation about the tool and how to use it. You will also find fully completed examples of the tool. This is extremely helpful and adds to the book's value as a practical reference.



## **New Lean Training Product: *Single Point Lessons***

- Have you ever had a coaching opportunity but no quick and easy lean tool reference materials within reach to maximize this opportunity?
  - Have you ever needed the lean tool kit organized in one simple place to use for brainstorming in a kaizen or lean project?
  - Have you ever been stuck in applying a lean concept and wanted some quick tips on how to get unstuck?
- you need it:
- What is it? This question provides a brief definition of the tool or concept.
  - Why use it? This question provides the purpose of the tool.
  - What are the factors for success?
  - How do you use it?

The 65 topics have been organized into four information categories: (1) Rules and Principles, (2) Process Tools, (3) Concepts, and (4) Change Management and Improvement Tools.

"We saw a definite need with our clients to provide quick hit, one piece flow training materials to help teach the lean toolkit," states Melissa Curtis-Hendley, Director of the Center's Instructional Design Studio. "The Single Point Lessons were aimed directly at this

need."

To provide maximum flexibility, the Single Point Lessons will be distributed electronically. The Lean Learning Center will also customize the layout of the Single Point Lessons to include corporate standards and logos.

"We can imagine any number of uses for these Single Point Lessons, from memory joggers, to training aids, to advanced application tips. We want these to be an extremely easy to use reference tool," adds Curtis-Hendley.

To learn more about Single Point Lessons, including pricing and distribution, please contact us at [info@leanlearningcenter.com](mailto:info@leanlearningcenter.com) or at (248) 478-1480.

Examples from the Single Point Lessons collection are provided on the following pages. The Lean Learning Center is very excited to offer this product to help organizations teach lean concepts.

#### **FOR MORE**

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**(248) 478-1480**

# Single Point Lessons

Single  
Point  
Lesson

## Lean Principle: Systematic Problem Solving



**1. What are the 5 lean principles?**



**2. Why use lean principles?**



- Principles reflect our beliefs and values which in turn influence our behaviors
- Lean principles define how we want to operate our business, run our processes, and improve toward the ideal state
- Organizations that share a common set of principles have a common and consistent pattern of decision making

**3. What is the definition of this lean principle?**

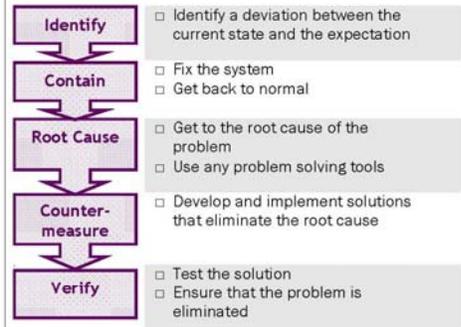
- "Systematic" problem solving in a lean environment adds:
  - Problem statements describing what is wrong with the current reality in terms of gaps or unexpected results
  - Root cause analysis that drills down to the process level using terms like activities, connections and flows and rule or principle breaches
  - Countermeasures selected from a stable of lean tools carefully selected only after the process level root cause is identified
  - Verification based on structured reflection
- Teams work to solve problems at the root cause level to eliminate the potential for problems to reoccur
- Behaviors associated with Systematic Problem Solving:
  1. Surface problems immediately, without repercussion
  2. Stay with the problem longer and dig deeper to the system level until the root cause is identified
  3. View problems as opportunities to move towards the ideal state

**4. What are the benefits of this lean principle?**

- Systematic Problem Solving drives down to the root cause of the problem so that it doesn't continually reoccur.
- Everyone perceives, approaches, and solves problems in the same way
- Over time, repetitive problem solving cycles lead to significant, tangible improvements making processes more effective and efficient

**5. How do I use this lean principle?**

- Follow this framework for solving problems, no matter how big or small.



- Make time for systematic problem solving focused on selected repeat problems. (E.g. constantly firefighting symptoms of multiple repeat problems in an attempt to get them to just go away is not a strategy for long term improvement)
- Create methods for employees to log problems as they arise. Without mechanism to surface problems, many important opportunities will go unnoticed.
- Make sure systematic problem solving sessions are attended by people who can not only help with the process but learn the systematic problem solving process for their use on future problems.

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LESSONS CAN BE  
CUSTOMIZED FOR  
YOUR  
ORGANIZATION**

# Single Point Lessons



Single  
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## Error Proofing

Lean Learning Center

**1. What is error proofing?**

- Proactively building standards into the system, at the lowest point of activity, to prevent events caused by human, machine and process error.

**2. Why use error proofing?**

- Limit the impact of human mistakes at the source and make them less likely to occur.
- Immediately signal any error to the worker so that it can be immediately addressed and prevented from proceeding downstream.
- Eliminate incorrect actions that often result from individual choices by enforcing operational procedures or sequences.
- Prevents product damage, machine damage, and personal injury.

**3. What factors are critical for error proofing success?**

- The right way to complete a process or task is made easier or the wrong way to complete a process or task is made impossible.
- Utilize 5 Why to identify the root cause of the error before developing error proofing solutions. This will ensure that you are focusing on the process and not the people performing the process.
- Recognition that we are humans and we will make mistakes when the opportunity exists.**
- Error proofing device makes problems immediately self-evident.**
- Problems are not passed along through the process.**
- Variation is removed from every activity—there is only one way.**

**4. How do you use error proofing?**

	Detection Type	Definition	Example
<b>1. Choose a Detection Methodology</b>	<b>Contact</b>	Makes contact with every product to detect any deviation in size, shape or other specific defect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wall mounted hair dryers have prongs on the bracket that automatically turn off the hair dryer once it makes contact with the wall mount in case the user forgets to turn the device off.</li> </ul>
	<b>Fixed Value Method</b>	Used in operations where a set of steps are sequentially performed to prevent any steps from being missed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An alarm begins to sound after you have shifted into 'drive' without first fastening your seatbelt. The sequential order would indicate that the first step in the order is to fasten your seatbelt prior to shifting gears.</li> </ul>
	<b>Motion Stop Method</b>	Ensures that the correct number of steps have been taken and prevents an individual from mistakenly performing a step that is not part of the standardized sequence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ATM machine opens the slot for your deposit only after the machine has verified that you have specified the account that the deposit should be credited to and the amount of the entire deposit.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Choose a Basic Function</b>	<b>Shutdown</b>	Normal functions stop when error is predicted or detected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Automatic timer inside of an iron that automatically turns the heating device off if the user forgets.</li> </ul>
	<b>Control</b>	Makes errors impossible or makes sure error cannot be passed on to the next process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car doors automatically lock once the speedometer reaches 12 miles per hour.</li> <li>Gas cap is tethered to your car, making it impossible to drive off and forget it at the gas station.</li> </ul>
	<b>Warning</b>	Signals when a defect is predicted or detected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An alarm begins to sound once your ATM transaction has been completed to warn you to remove your card from the machine before you walk away.</li> </ul>

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Process Tools

**SINGLE POINT  
LESSONS PROVIDE  
EASY ACCESS TO A  
WEALTH OF LEAN  
INFORMATION**

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[www.leanlearningcenter.com](http://www.leanlearningcenter.com)

The Lean Learning Center was founded in 2001 by manufacturing and consulting industry veterans Andy Carlino, Jamie Flinchbaugh and Dennis Pawley to address the gaps and barriers that are holding back companies from successful lean transformation. In addition to the advanced curriculum, the Center has developed a learning environment designed specifically for adult learning, utilizing techniques that include discovery simulations, case studies, personal planning and journaling. Together, with affiliate Achievement Dynamics, founded by Andy Carlino in 1991, the companies offer a complete array of lean transformation services.

## Lean Learning Center Announcements

### LEAN EXPERIENCE (5-DAY PROGRAM):

September 17, 2007—*Sold Out*  
November 05, 2007—*Sold Out*  
December 10, 2007

### LEAN EXPERIENCE UK EDITION—SOLIHULL, ENGLAND (5-DAY PROGRAM):

October 22, 2007

### LEAN VALUE STREAM IMPROVEMENT (2-DAY PROGRAM):

October 29, 2007

This is not just another value stream mapping course — it is called Lean Value Stream Improvement. While building maps is an important part of the process, it is not as important as how to understand, analyze and dialogue about the gap between where you currently are and where you want to be. This course will cover the whole process — mapping, thinking, team views, priority setting and tools for closing your gaps. You will leave not just with an understanding of how to build and utilize value stream maps but you will also have the ability to turn that into a powerful program for change — including all the slides you need to teach, facilitate and lead.

### KEY BENEFITS

1. Learn how value stream improvement goes beyond building maps.
2. Be able to lead a team through building tension between an understanding of the current state and a vision of the ideal state.
3. Prioritize your efforts effectively for the 'biggest bang for your buck.'
4. Leave with all the tools (including materials) and knowledge you need for value stream improvement.

### LEAN KAIZEN WORKSHOP (5-DAY PROGRAM):

October 1, 2007

### LEADING LEAN (3-DAY PROGRAM)

December 5, 2007