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# LEAN THOUGHTS

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## *Norm Bodek speaks on Toyota*

*For those of you that have never had the opportunity to hear Norm speak ... keep looking at conference agenda's and make sure you register at one where he will be speaking. Norm was one of the initial creator's of Productivity Press and can be credited for bring many of the great writings of initial authors of the Toyota Production System and having them translated into English for all of to enjoy and learn from. Last week Norm decided to participate in a dialogue that was transpiring on the NW Lean Blog ... I thought you would enjoy his commentary ... enjoy ... Richard*

Dear NWLEAN Group,

I believe that Toyota has always wanted to make great automobiles in the most efficient way. To do that they develop their people by building their skills and capabilities; they focus on relentlessly eliminating the non-value adding wastes; and they improve the work environment for machines and for people. To have the most efficient manufacturing facility to compete with China and other low cost areas of the world you must fully automate your plants. Just look at what people are doing in the plant - those "boring, repetitive tasks." What a terrible waste of human talent.

One of Toyota's main goals is to reduce the labor content - in essence they would love to have a fully automated factory without people assembling and running the machines. That is what productivity is all about being efficient and effective. But, and this is the big BUT, Toyota does not lay off people as they reduce waste and automate their plants. They uplift their workforce whereby every worker knows how to identify problems and eliminate them - in essence Toyota workers are all becoming engineers to improve the processes and make new automobiles.

Many years ago, I visited a FANUC plant in Japan and saw robots making robots. On the third shift the lights were out with only one engineer in the computer control room while robots were making robots. FANUC employees are all engineers and FANUC is probably the world's best manufacturer of sophisticated machines. And every employee of FANUC has lifetime employment.

Your problem is that you are not focusing on developing people. You are very happy to have people continue to do those "boring," repetitive jobs.

Develop people to learn and build new skills every day. Challenge people to find and eliminate waste every single day. Let people learn from their own creative ideas.

I once published a book titled "Twenty Million Ideas in Forty Years at Toyota." They were getting around 70 implemented ideas per employee per year. How many are you getting? How much time do you invest in developing your employees?

Ironically, Toyota comes to America to build cars and we go to Asia to build our products, and what is left over for American workers to do? I am not saying that we should not become global companies but we must, we must develop people for us to be internationally competitive in the long term. For as our high skill jobs leave to overseas what is left over for us to do with the undeveloped talent that we have?

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Where "Lean Thoughts" Become Reality



There are seven classic wastes:

1. Excess inventory
2. Excess motion
3. Waiting and watching machines or other people
4. Over-processing or overproduction
5. Wrong processing
6. Defects - scrap, rework and inspection is actually a waste
7. Transportation is a waste

I added two new ones:

8. Underutilized talents of every worker
9. Every manager recognizes and breaks-through their resistance to change.

The manager should be identifying wastes and also be a catalyst to help people break through their resistance to change and eliminate those wastes.

Stop being an "obstacle" to change. As Dr. Shingo would always say "Do it!" You get a good idea, think it through, discuss it with others and then find a way to "DO IT!" - it is easy to find ways not to do it. Sure doing it might cause mistakes but that is one of the only ways we learn is by making misacts.

I have been teaching companies Quick and Easy Kaizen for years and only a handful are doing it. Why not? The average company that does Quick and Easy Kaizen saves \$4000 per year per employee and offers people a whole new way of looking at themselves with a new sense of dignity.

It is natural for people to resist change but breaking through that resistance is the only way to grow and a manager's primary job is to help people grow.

For further information you might like to read my books *The Idea Generator* and *Kaikaku The Power and Magic of Lean*.

Wishing you the best,

Norman Bodek  
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*Norm did miss one of my favorite wastes ... "unactionable information systems" donated several years ago by Robert "Doc" Hall*

*And Norm continued in the discussion ...*

Thank you for your email. Some clarification is due. Toyota is probably the most conservative of the automobile manufacturers. They proceed through continuous improvement, very slowly, but methodically. They want to get it right. Last year, I visited Georgetown for the third time after a break of three years, met with Gary Convis, then president of US Toyota, and saw many more robots than before. In fact, they have 700 fewer people than five years ago producing close to double the number of automobiles.

They are very careful in selecting new people for those people are considered as members, family members, of the company. When they were opening their plant in Texas they needed less than 2000 people and received over 115,000 resumes. They do interview over 20 people to select one. Because these employees are considered as lifetime employees, even though they don't say that, to my knowledge, they have not laid off a single worker in over 50 years. Toyota is a balanced company committed to the wellbeing of their employees, dedicated to making great quality cars for their customers, serving their communities (they helped build the engineering college at the University of Kentucky,) educating their suppliers, etc. etc. They continuously educate and develop their employees, treated as real assets, and they don't want to lose those assets - they will pay for your college education. They are dedicated to people.

But, Toyota can do it with anyone. They took over the NUMMI plant in California from General Motors, GM's worst union plant and completely turned it around in just one year. They took those same union employees and made that plant as good as any other Toyota plant.

I want to emphasize waste # 9 "Every manager recognizes and breaks through their resistance to change." I like to take managers on tours of their factory floor to identify wastes. It is easy to see when you look for it. It is very difficult for managers to then stop and find a way at that exact moment to get rid of that waste. Toyota managers are trained to relentlessly identify waste and right on the spot do something to get rid of it.

To survive in this fiercely competitive world we must be dedicated to our employees. We must treat them as real assets and give them life long learning. If not, you better start to learn Chinese.

Take care,

Norman Bodek

Consortium Event Schedule



Tour Workshop Conference

January	February	March	April	May	June
<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 24 <u>Eaton Electrical</u>, contact Joe Fisher, <a href="mailto:JoeRFisher@eaton.com">JoeRFisher@eaton.com</a></p> <p><b>W</b></p> <p>La-Z-Boy Corporate Monroe MI February 14 &amp; 15 <u>Enterprise Value Stream Mapping</u> How to use the VSM tools to map admin processes. Contact Richard Kunst for info. <a href="mailto:Richard.kunst@la-z-boy.com">Richard.kunst@la-z-boy.com</a> Register at <a href="http://www.ame.org">www.ame.org</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 14, <u>CFN Precision</u>, contact Paul Kaulback, <a href="mailto:pkaulback@cfn-inc.com">pkaulback@cfn-inc.com</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 21, <u>Nestle Waters</u>, contact Mariela Castano <a href="mailto:mcastano@perriergroup.com">mcastano@perriergroup.com</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 18, <u>CTS Corp.</u>, contact Bob Garces, <a href="mailto:Bob.Garces@ac.ctscorp.com">Bob.Garces@ac.ctscorp.com</a></p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>Lean Design &amp; Development Conference Wed 18 to Fri 20 Chicago Contact <a href="http://www.iirusa.com/lean">www.iirusa.com/lean</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 16, <u>Stackpole CSD</u>, contact Don Barber <a href="mailto:Don_Barber@stackpole.ca">Don_Barber@stackpole.ca</a></p> <p>Consortium Shareshowcase</p> <p>Saturday 05 <u>CGL Guelph</u>, Contact Cindy Grolleman <a href="mailto:Grolleman@canada.com">Grolleman@canada.com</a> or Dave Deskur <a href="mailto:daved@cglmfg.com">daved@cglmfg.com</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 20, <u>Morrison LaMothe</u>, contact Tony Vita <a href="mailto:tvita@morrisonlamthe.com">tvita@morrisonlamthe.com</a></p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>AME Regional Conference Mon 18 to Thur 21 Edmonton, Alberta Contact <a href="http://www.measureupforsuccess.com">www.measureupforsuccess.com</a></p>
July	August	September	October	November	December
		<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 26, <u>Kraft Foods</u>, contact Hanif Jivraj <a href="mailto:hjivraj@Kraft.com">hjivraj@Kraft.com</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 10, <u>CGL Manufacturing</u> contact Dave Deskur <a href="mailto:daved@cglmfg.com">daved@cglmfg.com</a></p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>AME National Conference Mon 29 to Friday Nov 2 Chicago Contact <a href="http://www.ame.org">www.ame.org</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 14, <u>Messier-Dowty</u>, contact Mike Smith <a href="mailto:Mike_Smith@Messier-dowty.on.ca">Mike_Smith@Messier-dowty.on.ca</a></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p>Wednesday 12, <u>Orenda</u>, contact Brenda McIntosh <a href="mailto:brendamcintosh@orenda.com">brendamcintosh@orenda.com</a></p>