



LEAN MANAGEMENT JOURNAL

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BACK TO SCHOOL

Analysing different ways of teaching
lean and sharing best practice

Organisations featured in this edition include:
Airbus, MITIE, 365.cafe, Erasmus Medical Center,
Gestamp, AkzoNobel, United States Marine Corps,
Magna Mirrors, SCGM, North West London Hospitals
NHS Trust, Corsorci Sanitari del Garraf

IN THIS ISSUE:

The lowdown on lean: In an exclusive interview,
Professor *Daniel T Jones*, lean guru and senior adviser to
the Lean Global Network, talks about the most interesting
issues facing the lean community worldwide

Home schooled: What does it take to devise an effective
internal lean training programme? Facilities management
specialist MITIE and aircraft manufacturer Airbus share
with LMJ the secrets of their academies

The Institute of Lean: In a letter to the Editor, *Keivan
Zokaei* and *Donna Samuel* explain the need for
a globally-recognised institution to regulate lean
qualifications and commission research

¡Adios waste!: This month, LMJ analyses the evolution of
lean in Spain, presenting case studies of four companies
on the journey

The Healthcare Watch: In this new section, the journal
presents lean case studies from the healthcare sector. This
month, *Kishamer Sidhu* shares details of how lean has
helped the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust





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Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov taught us that we never stop learning.

Since the beginning of time, and despite the evidence from a slew of reality TV shows, human beings have evolved into more adaptive, stronger and smarter animals.

We have achieved this by experiencing the world around us and learning from it.

Change may be difficult to effect, in our personal lives just like in business, but the reality is that it is a quintessentially human trait. It can be frustrating, scary and even dangerous. It pushes us out of our comfort zones and forces us to question ourselves.

Have no fear and embrace it! By applying the right amount of knowledge and understanding – of ourselves, of others, of a situation – change can only be for the better. It becomes improvement. And if we are persistent in researching, studying, measuring and analysing – in a word, learning – then **we can make that improvement continuous and incremental.**

Change is inherent to any business. Whether or not change is realised is just a matter of learning where to look for opportunities to improve and how to fulfil them.

“ Are true devotees of lean, therefore, naturally wary of seeking change? ”

This issue of *Lean Management Journal* looks at how a business can ensure that its workforce possesses **the skills and information required to make change happen**. No book will answer all the questions you may have about change management, and there is no way you can improve without will power, engagement, practice – and dedication.

There are many ways to develop ourselves professionally, for example attending university courses or conferences (on page 12, Joseph Paris looks at the different forms of training and learning available to lean practitioners), or developing a **training programme** that is unique to our organisation, like MITIE or Airbus have done – see page 07.

Learning from others, through shared practice and benchmarking, seems to be the preferred way to make the first steps with lean. Look at the experience of Erasmus Medical Center with AkzoNobel and the Clusters Initiative in India on pages 16 and 18.

While we are on the subject of learning, don't miss my **exclusive interview with lean guru Daniel Jones**, who gives LMJ the latest lowdown on the lean movement (page 34).

But consider this conundrum. Lean is devoted to the elimination of waste, to simplifying processes. The nature of continuous improvement piles more and more aspects of change as we constantly try to transform ourselves. Are true devotees of lean, therefore, naturally wary of seeking change?

Let's hope not. Perfection may not exist, but that doesn't mean that you can't shoot for the stars.

Roberto Priolo, Editor, Lean Management Journal

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More information on our editorial board, their experience, and views on lean is available on the *LMJ* website: www.leanmj.com



Joseph F Paris Jr, Chairman of XONITEK Group of Companies, offers a round-up of the different types of training and education available to prospective and experienced lean practitioners.

Charting the right course

As continuous improvement practitioners, it is natural (even a passion) to always seek ways to improve ourselves and the value we drive to our colleagues and the companies for which we work. During our quest for this personal and professional development, sometimes we know precisely in which areas we wish to improve our skillset and where we need to concentrate our efforts, and sometimes we seek to satisfy a curiosity of some subject matter.

Once we decide on what we wish to learn, we need to decide what level of knowledge and competency we wish to possess at the conclusion of our being taught and, most importantly, we need to ensure that the method we select for the conveying of that knowledge and competency to us will yield the expected results.

Therefore, during this evaluation process, we must always remember the following corollary: the level of effort required is directly proportional to the depth of the knowledge and competency acquired – with “comparative value” being defined as the *investment requirements associated with gaining the knowledge versus the benefit gained to oneself and one’s company*. In the chart below, I grade “comparative value” as “low”, “moderate”, and “high”, where:

- **Low** is “logistical” content. The participant should expect to learn the terminology used, the value derived from proper use of the content, and perhaps some basic applications.
- **Moderate** is “tactical” content. At this level, the participant should expect to learn how to plan the use of the content, when to deploy, and how to manage.
- **High** is “strategic” content. At this highest level, the participant should expect to learn how to define objectives in the discipline and be able to communicate how these objectives will be realised.

We also must consider “soft-costs” when we tally the total cost of investment. These include: the time of the employee learning, the time of the employee(s) teaching, the development of internal curriculum, travel and lodging, etc.

In addition to comparative value, one must also keep in mind the credibility of the origin of the content being learned. Here, the student must always keep in mind “*Caveat Emptor*”, or more commonly known as “let the buyer beware” – especially when it comes to certifications.

For instance, I was speaking with a recent university graduate who wished for me to review her Curriculum Vitae (also known as CV or resume). I saw noted that she had earned her “Six Sigma Green Belt Certification” at the University, so I asked to know the details of her Green Belt project. To my surprise, she had not worked on a Green Belt project – or any project. She just had to sit through a week-long class and pass a test. My advice to her was to change her “certification” to either “Yellow-Belt” or, alternatively, state that she received Green Belt training.

Lesson: there is no universally recognised governing body for certifications in the disciplines of lean six sigma nor is there a recognised standard for curricula and, unfortunately, there are many people out there who just want to pad their resume and who feel any certification is better than no certification.

That being said, there are organisations that devote themselves solely to training and education of lean six sigma and related subjects such as the American Society for Quality (ASQ) and the Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE) – and there are many companies who have their own internal, and robust, programmes, such as General Electric, Motorola, and International Paper.

The simple way to assess the quality of a certification is simply to listen to how the person announces their certification – are they consciously or subconsciously embarrassed? For instance, I would become immediately suspicious if someone were to simply say to me, “I am a Black Belt” – as opposed to “I am a GE Black-Belt”. In any case, I am going to ask them about their projects in great detail to determine the true level of knowledge – since the application of knowledge is where the value is realised.

The rest of this article is devoted to the various methods of learning, the

investment requirements, their pros and cons, and the comparative value that should be expected.

- **Webinars:** Learning by attending a webinar is the least costly and most convenient method of learning, but what you will learn is greatly limited. As such, a webinar is a great way of gaining exposure to a topic (or as a refresher-course for updates to knowledge), but you should not expect to become proficient in any topic. Would you trust your surgery or the filing of your taxes to someone who learned only by attending a webinar? An additional risk to webinars is that (since they are so inexpensive to produce) those who might charge to attend might not be credible conveyors of knowledge – and if they are free, I can almost guarantee you that (in almost every case) they are merely sales pitches disguised as learning experiences.

- **Expected investment requirements:** Free to \$250 (£150) plus minimal “soft-costs”;

- **Expected duration:** 30 minutes to a half-week;

- **Comparative value:** Low.

- **Seminars (and conferences):** Attending seminars and conferences is a good way to get a deeper dive into a subject in a more collegiate setting. One of the most significant benefits of attending one of these events, and one that should not be dismissed, is the ability to interface with peers one-on-one. This interaction and the exchange of practical experiences (if pursued) will enable the participant to better understand the material as it is applied in context, help to build invaluable interpersonal and communication skills, and expand one’s professional network to facilitate problem-solving in the future. One should expect that free seminars will be sales pitches (think along the lines of a pitch for timeshares).

- **Expected investment requirements:** \$1,000 to \$5,000 (£600 to £3,000) including considerable “soft-costs”;

- **Expected duration:** 1-5 days;

- **Comparative value:** Low to Low-Moderate.

- **On-the-Job (OJT):** Assuming the OJT programme is well developed and structured (which is not to be taken as a given), the successful student should have an understanding of the tools and skillset necessary to satisfactorily perform the tasks related to the carrying out of the responsibilities associated with their position. However, this training will be limited to the performance of tasks and processes. As such, it would be misguided to expect the successful student to apply what they have learned strategically.

- **Expected investment requirements:** \$2,500 to \$15,000 (£1,500 to £9,000) – mostly internal “soft-costs”;

- **Expected duration:** Half-week to one month;

- **Comparative value:** Low-Moderate to Moderate.

■ **Classroom training:** Learning by attending a formal class (even if delivered via webcast) will result in the student receiving a much broader and deeper understanding of a subject. Since there is much more “heavy lifting” involved in producing a classroom-delivered curriculum, there is almost always an investment requirement on the part of the student involved and the instances of non-credible conveyors of knowledge greatly diminishes. Even so, you will want to ensure the organisation (whether a University, an Institute, a Learning Company, or other entity) has a track-record for success and clearly details the level of effort and the expected take-away for the student.

□ **Expected investment requirements:** \$5,000 to \$20,000 (£3,000 to £12,000) – including internal “soft-costs”;

□ **Expected duration:** 1 to 12 weeks;

□ **Comparative value:** Low Moderate to High Moderate.

■ **Integrated learning:** Sometimes referred to as “blended learning”, an integrated learning programme melds several content delivery methods including: webinars, self-study, classroom training, and one-on-one mentoring and coaching. Low-level activity is taken off-line (where the attendance value of the instructor is *de minimis*), but with a corresponding increased emphasis on individualised mentoring for high-level activity.

□ **Expected investment requirements:** \$5,000 to \$20,000 (£3,000 to £12,000) including internal “soft costs”;

□ **Expected duration:** 4 to 16 weeks;

□ **Comparative value:** Moderate to High Moderate.

■ **Company-specific education programmes:** Best-in-class companies do not follow the best practice documents created by consulting companies and analysts – they create them themselves. They realise that published best practices are always in the past tense and, if achieved, would mean they are still years behind the industry leaders. Best-in-class companies create their own education programmes by teaching the known tools and methodologies as they are applied, in the context of the company, within the company. These programmes merge the delivery platforms and approach associated with integrated learning with the company-specific content associated with OJT. If properly and fully developed, this approach and resultant programme will yield the highest comparative value for a company by enabling the

business to identify what actually needs improving and go about improving it while also to identify, quantify and capture its own best practices and make this content part of the curriculum.

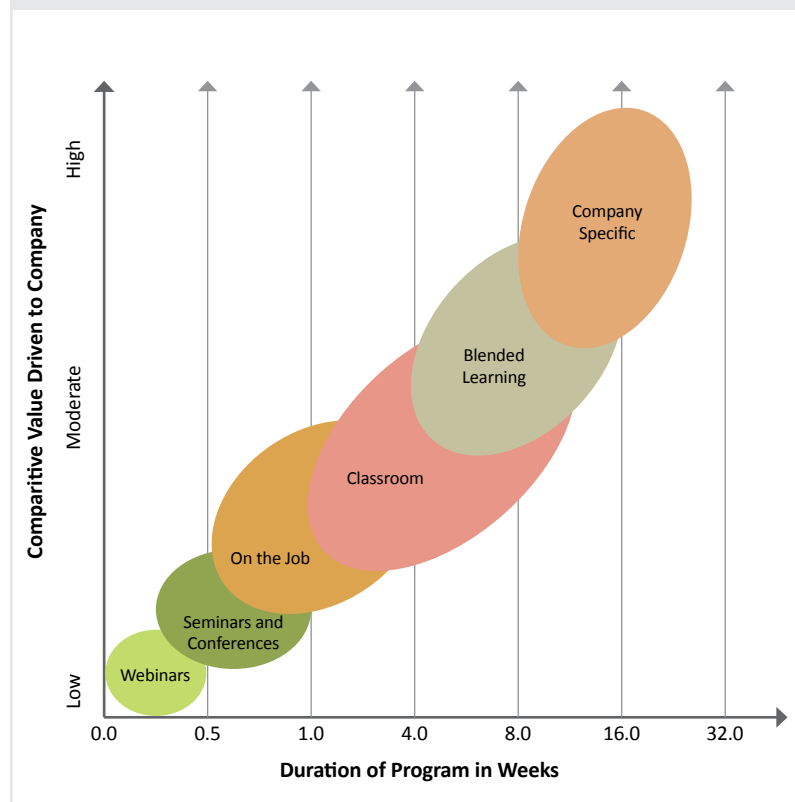
□ **Expected investment requirements:** \$7,500 to \$25,000 (£4,500 to £15,000) including “soft costs”;

□ **Expected duration:** 8 to 26 weeks;

□ **Comparative value:** High Moderate to High.

It is important to note that continuing education is critical to any professional who wants to remain on top of their game – but, as continuous improvement professionals, we already know that.

Figure 1: Different forms of training: value and timeframes



E V E N T S

There is currently an expanding pool of events available for the development of the lean community. They offer both general and sector specific opportunities to renew your enthusiasm and gain new perspectives through communicating with lean contemporaries.

UPCOMING LEAN EVENTS INCLUDE:

LeanNHS

March 14, London, United Kingdom

LeanNHS is a free forum for NHS employees who are interested or involved in the operational improvement process within NHS. It provides them with a platform to share their work, success and challenges with peers.

LeanNHS, sponsored by Kinetik Solutions and LeanExecutives, is a quarterly event taking place in London and Birmingham, UK, alternatively.

For more information, please visit leanmidland.org.uk and leanlondon.org.uk

IN2:INTHINKING NETWORK 2013 FORUM

June 19-23, Los Angeles, California

The 12th annual forum is themed *The Art of Reflection: Connect - Inspire - Act*. The event was formed in 2001 by a group of students of the work of W. Edwards Deming and related theorists, including Russell Ackoff, Edward de Bono, Tom Johnson, Peter Senge, and Genichi Taguchi.

The aim of the five-day Forum is to continue to elevate the consciousness of individual and collective thinking. Join in order to learn, connect and improve how you work, learn and think together. Registration fee: \$400, with a \$50 discount for registering on or before May 8.

More info at www.in2in.org

LEAN GLOBAL NETWORK

Upcoming LGN events include:

- 2013 Lean Transformation Summit; Orlando, Florida – **March 13-14**
- Lean Produktivitets Konference; Kolding, Denmark – **April 30-May 1**
- Lean Healthcare Summit; Brisbane, Australia – **May 7-9**
- 9th Lean Manufacturing and Services Summit; Melbourne, Australia – **May 14-16**
- International Lean Management Conference; Wroclaw, Poland – **June 11-13**

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE SOCIETY

Just over a year ago, the Operational Excellence Society only had a couple of chapters. Today, with 2,500 active members and several chapters located around the world, this not-for-profit organisation has been growing steadily.

There are active chapters in London, Dubai, Ciudad Juarez, Warsaw, Abu Dhabi, Cologne, Frankfurt, New York, Atlanta, Munich and Monterrey.

Type in the following link (<http://goo.gl/jMdqB>) for a full listing or contact Karolina Redzicka, Operational Excellence Society Liaison at RedzickaK@xonitek.com

COVENTRY UNIVERSITY LEAN IN UNIVERSITIES CONFERENCE 2013

March 26-28, Coventry, United Kingdom

This event is themed *Delivering Operational Excellence* and builds upon the previous lean and continuous improvement conferences held at leading UK universities over the last several years. The higher education sector is facing a period of significant change, and is being challenged to demonstrate its competitiveness in the face of pressure to produce qualified graduates with the skills that industry, business and commerce need and to engage in world-leading applied research.

There will be a focus on drivers including: improving student experience; creating staff satisfaction; increasing applied research; building lasting alumni relationships; delivering environmental and sustainable operations. CUCIU 2013 brings together academics and professionals from higher education, the public and private sector to discuss important issues and to share existing good practice. For more information, please visit www.coventry.ac.uk