

LEAN LINE



The Dangers of Complacency

"We shall have no better conditions in the future if we are satisfied with all those which we have at present."
~ Thomas Edison

Complacency is the state of being content with achievements while simultaneously being unaware of pending dangers. We have made great strides in reducing waste, identifying opportunities and working together to enhance our lean culture. With success comes the urge to rest on our laurels. We tend to look at ourselves with "rose colored glasses" and believe what others are saying about us. Our peers have realized that we have been riding the cutting edge of improvement and have asked us on numerous occasions to share our knowledge and experience with them. A lean organization should never fear sharing this knowledge because their success should push us to strive to perform even better.

Lean Mission: To continually examine our processes to provide greater value to our customers without waste.

The danger lies in the old Greek term "Hubris". Hubris is the act of believing in your own greatness despite the fact you are slowly sinking back into the pack. We must never be satisfied or comfortable with where we are or the improvements we have made. It does not matter how great an improvement may be, someone somewhere is already taking the necessary steps to improve that same process. At one time, the world believed the four-minute mile was unattainable; it was thought was man improved as much as he could, but in 1954 one man improved on perfection and beat that time. Now high school athletes break that once-impossible barrier.

As we look at our surroundings, we must never fall into the comforts of complacency. Complacency is familiar like our favorite sofa or recliner so it is easy to relax and lull ourselves to sleep. We must strive to stay focused and uncomfortable. Greatness is found during uncomfortable times. So we must continuously search for ways to reduce waste and improve ourselves lest we are left behind.



What are you personally doing different in 2012 that may be outside of your comfort zone?

"If we're not uncomfortable every day, we're not growing. All the good stuff is outside our comfort zone."

~ Jack Canfield

Weakest Link



Grunau's 2012 Lean activities for all locations are focusing on what improvements can be made to lessen what they establish to currently be their "weakest link" in their processes. In Milwaukee, several departments are working on their own "weakest link".

The first part in this problem solving process is to identify the root cause which teams are using various Lean tools to accomplish. The A3 form is being used by all to help organize the problem-solving thought process on to one 11 x 17 sheet of paper for a concise summary.

Once the root cause is identified, other team members may get involved to brainstorm alternative countermeasures to improve the process.