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A Good Time of Year

Hello! Our garden at home is getting its final 5S of the season, cutting back on all of the perennials, pulling and chopping the annual vegetables and flowers, raking and mulching leaves. My goal every year is to have all of the garden beds prepared for the freezing/thawing cycles over the winter that will break down organic matter and become compost by next spring.

From a work perspective, it's a good time of year to identify areas in your office, yard, shop floor, etc. to loop back to the 1st S (Sort) and 2nd S (Set in Order or Straighten) steps. When everyone is busy during the spring, summer, and fall months, 3rd S (Shine) activities can drop to minimal effort, and labeling/signage deteriorates as "stuff" starts cluttering the work areas.

Suggested steps on how to successfully loop back to the 1st and 2nd S:

- (1) Pick just one or two areas to keep the effort concentrated;
- (2) Identify at least two people who work in this area or areas and assign them to remove all clutter (items that don't belong) by either throwing out obvious trash or red-tagging items of value;
- (3) Once all clutter has been removed, reset all storage/holding areas for the remaining items;
- (4) Label/identify tools, parts, SKU's, and other permanent fixtures in the area;
- (5) Have a final wipe-down/washing of the area and contents to reset 3rd S.

This month's article covers Dr. W. Edwards Deming's "Fourteen Points", a set of management best practices for companies to increase quality and productivity. Dr. Deming's management philosophy was fully described in his book, *Out of the Crisis*, written in 1986. Although it may seem to be an old book, the philosophy is still spot-on.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

The Fourteen Points

W. Edwards Deming was an American statistician and management consultant who was instrumental in fostering attention to quality and continuous improvement in post-WWII Japan. Out of his consulting work, Dr. Deming developed fourteen management practices to help companies increase their quality and productivity:

1. Create constancy of purpose for improving products and services.
2. Adopt the new philosophy.
3. Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality.
4. End the practice of awarding business on price alone; instead, minimize total cost by working with a single supplier.
5. Improve constantly and forever every process for planning, production and service.
6. Institute training on the job.
7. Adopt and institute leadership.
8. Drive out fear.
9. Break down barriers between staff areas.
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations and targets for the workforce.
11. Eliminate numerical quotas for the workforce and numerical goals for management.
12. Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship, and eliminate the annual rating or merit system.
13. Institute a rigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone.
14. Put everybody in the company to work to accomplish the transformation.

How can you bring these fourteen points into your lean journey? Since you can't jump into all fourteen points in one leap, it may be better to group them into general categories and then prioritize the implementation:

Management Commitment – Points 1, 2, and 7 – The most important points to tackle first... if there is no commitment from company top management to embark on continuous improvement, none of the other points matter.

Target/Goal Setting – Points 10 and 11 – This is the toughest for me to put my head around... having goals such as achieving certain sales/profit margins would be difficult for employees to embrace since they have very little influence. A better set of targets/goals would be establishing standard work and then monitoring performance against the standard (such as efficiency).

Training – Points 6 and 13 – Commit to constant training and provide educational opportunities for all employees.

Employee Commitment – Points 8, 9, 12, and 14 – With the first three sets of points launched, concentrate on getting all employees to buy into the philosophy.

Process Improvement – Points 3, 4, and 5 – Once the decision is clearly made to begin the never-ending journey, production and information processes need to be aligned with the philosophy.

The accompanying graphic illustrates the relationships between these five sets of points. The centerpiece is Process Improvement... but you can't get there without

establishing all of the other relationships first. Management Commitment is the driver and is therefore linked to each of the others. Finally, Employee Commitment taps into Training, Targets/Goal Setting, and Management Commitment before they're ready for Process Improvement.

Reference: Fourteen Points, "Quality Glossary", Quality Progress, June 2007, pg. 46.



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