Chair’s Message

In many cases, people you like are not always people you’re going to work well with—and vice versa. This is why I feel fortunate to be part of the Lean Enterprise Division leadership team. Whereas we represent different cultural, spiritual, and business beliefs, our common ground of lean thinking allows us all to work together and achieve incredible results. We have established amazing friendships, have fun developing new ideas, and enjoy serving our membership.

The significance of finding friends in your work life is always valuable. But, bonding with other individuals who understand the power of lean is remarkable. I’m sure you’ve had the same experiences I have had. You are attending some sort of industry function with colleagues. Someone casually asks you about lean. And, you simply can’t stop talking about how lean has not only impacted your professional life but your personal life as well.

It is not uncommon for members of any association to say that the reason they belong is for the networking experience. Often the networking experience is about finding new jobs and making connections with people who can move you forward in your career. Adam Small of the Strategic Business Network claims, “Networking is the single most powerful marketing tactic to accelerate and sustain success for any individual or organization!”

I believe Adam Small. But I also believe the true and untapped value of networking with your peers is the ability to have meaningful conversations with those who understand and appreciate your passion. Sharing space with those who really relate to your lean approach is validating. Let’s face it. Not everyone in business wants to be process improved! We have special challenges unique to our choice of methodology.

As chair of the Lean Enterprise Division I find it enjoyable and comforting to be in a community of critical thinkers who are interested in problem solving and who have an innate desire to make everything we touch better, faster, and more cost-effective.

Terra Vanzant Stern, Ph.D.
2015–2016 Lean Enterprise Division Chair

About Lean Enterprise Division Chair

Terra Vanzant Stern, Ph.D., PMP, SPHR/GPHR, is a Six Sigma Master Black Belt who has studied in the United States and Australia. She is the author of HR Concepts for Project Managers, Lean Six Sigma Practical Bodies of Knowledge, and Lean Six Sigma: International Standards and Global Guidelines. Her most recent book, Lean and Agile Project Management, publishes in March 2016. Vanzant Stern served as ASQ Denver Section chair and co-chaired the 2013 ASQ Rocky Mountain Quality Conference. She is currently the president and owner of SSD Global Solutions, a firm dedicated to increasing critical thinking skills by using basic project management practices, lean thinking, and Six Sigma methodology.
Letter From the (Guest) Editor

Hello everyone. Surprise! I am back once again, filling in while the Lean Enterprise Division looks for a new newsletter editor. The position requires a commitment of four to five hours per month plus quarterly availability to participate in a 60-minute teleconference. For more information on this exciting opportunity, email terra.stern@ssdglobal.net.

In this issue we feature an article on organizational process improvement, “Process Improvement and Darwinism,” by first-time author (in this publication) Mohammed Bappah. For our Tools, Techniques, and Templates (T³), we look at the “Magic Power” of change management as described by our own Scott Smith. Finally, be sure to read “Learning From the Experience of … Michael Ballé.” As always, we share division updates in our Lean Bytes section and provide the latest information on upcoming webinars.

Thanks for taking the time to read Lean Enterprise Division News. Please stop by our booth if you are at the 2016 ASQ Lean and Six Sigma Conference in Phoenix, AZ, next year and say hello.

Kind regards and safe travels,

Lance B. Coleman  
Guest Editor

Attention Lean Enterprise Division Members!

- Are you a Senior member of ASQ in good standing for five years with active experience in quality-related positions for 15 years and an attained distinction in quality-related disciplines?
- Do you have ASQ certifications or have you demonstrated technical competence some other way?
- Have you given quality presentations or written quality-related articles or papers outside of your work environment?
- Are you, or have you been, active in ASQ at the section, division, or Society level on some committee or position?
- Have you been involved in a professional organization, other than ASQ, where you have contributed your quality expertise?
- Have you prepared quality-related training at work or outside your work environment?

If you answered YES to all of the above questions, you may be eligible to be considered by LED for nomination to become a Fellow. According to the ASQ website, “Fellow nominations are peer recognition that a member’s commitment to the quality profession has been exhibited beyond that of the average member.”

To be considered, please contact Alan Mendelssohn, the LED Fellows nominations chair, at asmquality@aol.com to discuss your eligibility. Initial completed nomination forms are to be submitted to the Fellows nominations chair by February 1 to allow sufficient time for the process to be completed. The nomination form and backup supporting documentation must to be submitted to ASQ prior to the May 1 deadline. By January of each year, ASQ announces the election of the new Fellows.

More information on the requirements for a Fellows nomination can be found on ASQ’s website at asq.org/members/account/fellow.html.

Newsletter Publishing Guidelines

Main Factors
1. Technical merit  
   o Includes correct facts  
   o Relevant to our mission
2. No selling of services
3. Nothing offensive
4. Original content only. Nothing previously published or presented.

Additional Factors
1. Not too similar to something recently done
2. Desired subject matter — how timely is material?
3. Well written (not requiring extensive editing)
4. Needed length

Categories — Newsletter submittals should fit into one of the following categories:
- A Case for Lean (ACL) — case studies and articles on successful deployment of lean in business  
- Lean in Life (LL) — examples of lean outside the workplace  
- Tools, Tips, and Techniques (T³) — practical applications of specific tools  
- Lean in Print (LIP) — book reviews  
- Lean Bytes (LB) — event coverage, announcements, and other news

Length — Desired length for tips, book reviews, articles and case studies is 600 to 1,200 words. Tips and book reviews would be in the 600- to 800-word range, articles in the 800- to 1,200-word range and case studies 1,000+ words. If a submittal goes beyond 1,200 words then we may look at breaking it into more than one part. For longer submittals, there is also the option of writing a 1,200- to 1,400-word piece for our quarterly lean column in Six Sigma Forum Magazine.

Review and Selection Process — All submitted works will be reviewed by at least two members of the subcommittee. The subject for a book review should be approved in advance by either two members of the subcommittee or by the subcommittee chair. Upon approval of a submitted work, the subcommittee forwards the piece on to the ASQ LED newsletter editor for final review, approval, and release. The newsletter editor will determine when accepted articles will be published.

Other — All articles containing photos should be submitted with the photo(s) as a separate jpeg attachment.

Calendar/Main Theme(s)  
(Submittals relating to the main theme receive priority)

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Processes Improvement and Darwinism

By Mohammed Bappah (MS, bachelor’s of technology, ACA, CISA, PMP)
Senior Auditor, NAPIMS, bappah.mohammed@nnpcgroup.com

Everything we do in life involves a process—from going to market, cooking, barbing, driving, running, swimming, buying, selling, tailoring, refining, drilling, transporting, building, etc. A process is a series of actions or steps toward achieving a particular end. An ideal process has an owner, objective, and five to eight activities. The process owner is the manager responsible for process input (X) and output (Y), mathematically represented as Y = f(X). The input/output of process can be tangible (product) or intangible (service). When process is done over and over again it becomes a repeatable process. Repetition brings perfection by careful analysis of process input to determine the output. Consequently, if a process is repeatable, then the outcome can be predictable and reproducible, if the outcome is predictable then the process input/output mix can be measurable, if it’s measurable then it’s controllable, and if it’s controllable then that process is stable and it can be improved.

In 1859, English naturalist Charles Darwin set out his theory of evolution by natural selection as an explanation for adaptation and speciation. He defined natural selection as the “principle by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved.” For example, a rat that runs faster (process time) than others may be more likely to escape predators, thereby increasing its chance of survival. The concept was simple but powerful: Individuals best adapted to their environments are more likely to survive and reproduce. Similarly, an organization best adapted to its environment is more likely to survive and create value to its stakeholders. The concept of fitness is central to natural selection. In broad terms, individuals who are more “fit” have better potential for survival, as in the well-known phrase “survival of the fittest.” In the context of natural selection, competition is an interaction between organisms or species in which the fitness of one is lowered by the presence of another. Limited supply of at least one resource (such as food, water, and territory) used by both can be a factor.

Charles Darwin’s theory of natural selection, one can deduce that organizations with better processes are fit for survival and that those with worse processes face extinction. Hence, processes are the building blocks of any organization. For example, if a process owner (manager) manages a process, whereby someone in any part of the world is doing the same process more efficiently in terms of quality, cost, and time, then the two processes are competing, and at the end the fittest process will survive. I had the personal experience of a cash payment process in two companies (A and B) where I was to pay 2,000 naira and 48,000 naira, respectively. The process took me two days at company A and five minutes in company B. Clearly, company A is operating an inefficient process that either needs improvement or faces extinction because there won’t be future employment opportunities with obsolete processes. Better processes are deliberate outcomes of process improvement/Six Sigma audits/projects.

Six Sigma dictates that a process is right when it creates and delivers precisely what the customer needs. Basically, the voice of the customer (VoC) is measured on three critical key performance indicators (KPIs): cost, quality, and time. Cost and quality are usually primary KPIs, while time (schedule) normally serves as a secondary or complementary KPI. In order to manage and improve a process, the team needs to: evaluate the process flow from upstream to downstream; gather data on key performance indicators; analyze the result; determine whether the process is stable and capable; determine whether the process meets customer requirements; and determine how to sustain improvements.

In conclusion, can Darwinism be applicable to other variant traits that exist in our society? Think about variation in languages, race, culture, etc. Are they converging? What about the variation in physical environment such as land and water, hills and valleys, forest and desert: Are they competing for the fittest to take it all?
Learning From the Experience of … Michael Ballé

By David Behling, LED Program Chair

How did you get interested in lean?

By accident, I was doing research for my Ph.D. in sociology and studying mental models. I was looking for fields where people look at the same thing with different perspectives. I spoke with my father, a lean pioneer, and he told me to look at a plant that was working with Toyota. He stated Toyota has a very different outlook than everyone else. I began studying their process and asked if they could give me their method or roadmap. I was told there is none. They stated they just solve problems, one after another. A Toyota engineer stated, “We do have one golden rule. We make people, before we make parts.” From a sociology standpoint, this was astounding and very interesting. I decided to study it more.

What have you been recently reminded of that is important to remember when practicing lean?

One thing we have consistently miss is Toyota's emphasis on people's ideas. Toyota's slogan in 1953 was “good thinking, good product.” Right from the start, Toyota decided what they really wanted out of people was ideas, an accelerated flow of ideas. People came to work to think, and not just work.

One thing we consistently miss is Toyota has the whole scaffolding of TPS, which has always been directed toward encouraging people to think and have ideas as opposed to “squeezing the lemon” to get more profit right away. Our relationship with tools comes from our trying to get people to work more; this was never the reason the tools were developed. We’re looking for something—the scope for improvement and work routine in a normal situation—we can’t see. The whole system teaches us to see something that is not there. We need to look for what is not observable. You are supposed to be looking for improvement potential.

If you were going to explain to someone (or an executive) what lean is, what would you say?

Lean is a thinking method to find out what are your key business challenges. When you're clear what those challenges are, it is a method to solve them not by yourselves and applying your solutions, but by solving them by developing people to see what they can accomplish. You use the generic lean questions to narrow down your business challenges, and secondly, you don’t try to solve these problems in a meeting room or in your head. You go to the shop floor and you work with the guys and they come up with the solution. You, then, see how you can integrate the solution back into your working practices.

What do you think is the biggest misunderstood concept concerning lean within society?

People see lean as a way to optimize processes and cut costs. Costs will very likely decrease as you follow the process, since you'll stop throwing away good money. The real purpose is to develop people about reinventing the business dynamics, seeking dynamic change in an organization.

Another thing Toyota made clear was line management needs to be taught to solve their own problems, not so all the problems would disappear and the processes run perfectly—that is impossible. You solve problems, because problem-based learning is how adults learn. When people learn to solve their own problems, they gain confidence. When people gain more confidence, the process will get better.

The process is the result of what the people who are in the process do. So at the end of the day, it is the result of their knowledge and how they work with each other. Somebody has to fix the process and solve the problems; unfortunately, it is usually a specialist.

… and within the lean community?

For some strange reason, the lean community seems to jump to flow without fixing the quality and following the established process of lean, which is looking at value, then the value streams, and then flow. Lean is first about quality then about flow. A second issue is lean is about teaching the line management to be autonomous in problem solving and developing the people, in their know-how, how autonomous they are in the job and in improvement. Lean is NOT a staff specialist’s job; it is a line thing. You don’t do lean to people; you do lean with people.

If you could have an organization adopt only one lean behavior or teach only one lean tool, what would it be?

It would be the pull system; it needs everything, i.e., flow, kanban, level plan, etc. … A system is a system and you need all four feet to make

cont. on p. 5
a table stand. If you’re not pulling, not using kanban, or do not have an understanding of what kanban is, you are probably doing something great; it is just not likely to be lean.

**What is your greatest concern about the lean movement?**

We have a structural problem; we do NOT have enough sensei. Toyota has the same problem internally. It takes a long time to develop a sensei, needing experience in lean and business, and there are only so many of them. Somebody has to be willing to take you back to check the hard issues. As a result of not having enough senseis, everybody is working around the hard things, which are quality, flexibility, and cost.

**What is the biggest opportunity for leadership in today’s world?**

I believe the biggest opportunity is the sustainability issue. Toyota is currently working on this. We are not studying or talking about this enough. In the book *Natural Capital*, a manifesto for business and environment sustainability, they conclude the only way to solve complex problems is to use Ohno’s 5 Whys method. Many people look for simple solutions to complex problems, but the truth is complex problems are complex problems. The only way to solve complex problems is to slice it up into small slices and somehow have a way to deal with each of the small slices without losing coherence. This is the only method to really improve a process and has the potential to attack the environmental challenge. They say, this is what lean does. Lean has the potential to attack environmental problems. The environmental community and Toyota have figured this out. The lean community has not as of yet.

*I would like to, once again, thank Michael Ballé for the opportunity and his time to conduct this interview.*

**About the author:**

David Behling has been involved with the Lean Enterprise Division leadership team since the division was first created in 2007. Throughout his career, he has gained process improvement/lean and quality experience by helping companies define and create value for their customers, transforming cultures, and building lean leadership. He is currently the director of process improvement at Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin and Metropolitan Chicago, a nonprofit community organization, in Milwaukee, WI.

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**Tools, Techniques, and Templates (T³): Magic Power¹**

**Developing Soft Skills as a Lean Practitioner**

*by Scott Smith*

As lean practitioners, we need to learn how to embrace change. We often wonder how we will get others to accept change when really what we are wondering is how we will get others to accept **being changed**. Many authors have broached this subject, and I have read many of their works. Dan and Chip Heath’s book, *Switch,²* is a recent and excellent example. But recently it has occurred to me that sometimes we take the wrong tact with change. Nobody I know likes to be forced to do anything, even if the change is in their best interest. I certainly know I don’t like the will of others to be imposed on me, even if just in the form of suggestion. All you can really do is display the facts for someone. The choice to change must come from within if it is going to be a long-term change. Recently I taught a class on critical thinking for the University of Phoenix. One of the biggest takeaways for me personally was the concept that we must first become aware of our biases and make allowances for them, and keep an open mind to the opinions of people we do not like or may not relate to if we truly want to learn and think critically. While this sounds simple, it is hard to overcome our prejudices and biases.

I recently saw the movie “My Big Fat Greek Wedding”³ on television for the umpteenth time. There is a scene where the main character, Toula, wants to take over her aunt’s travel agency, but knows her father would not approve of her leaving the family diner, until her mother helps convince her father that it is **his** idea for Toula to take over the travel agency business. **We will support and defend ideas if they are our ideas.** It is crucial to get the person who needs to make a change to be receptive to the change and embrace it for the right reasons. As with anything else, I will start with myself. I know I have areas I need to change in order to grow and self-actualize. Instead of fighting against being changed, I will step back and objectively evaluate if the change is really in my best interest. If it is in my best interest, then I will figure out what I need to do to make the change happen in an efficient manner. We all have the magic power to change inside us. And we need to learn not to fight the influence but evaluate the likely consequences of making the change (WIIFM?) that others have suggested and determine what we can do to better ourselves. I have to remember that I’ve got the power; I’ve got the magic in me.

**Once you learn how to let go and accept change yourself, it will be easier for you to help others unlock the power to change within them.**

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² *Switch,* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath, copyright 2010.
³ “My Big Fat Greek Wedding,” copyright 2001, Big Wedding, LLC.
Office of the Chair to Meet at Joint Technical Communities Conference (TCC)

This year, in an effort to keep our finger on the pulse of the division better, the office of the chair (OoC) committed to meet each week—virtually—to discuss the happenings, concerns, and successes of the division. I’m happy to report that this has been a true success for the division and something that has allowed the best communication within the division in a long time. As an additional strategic commitment, the OoC also committed to meeting face to face at least four times throughout the year. The next meeting for the OoC will be in Orlando, FL, in conjunction with the Joint Technical Communities Conference October 22 – 23. The timing is working out perfectly as this will allow us to wrap up some last-minute reviews and document the business plan and budget for the division, which is due in draft in November. This face-to-face meeting is strictly strategic, and we are looking forward to hitting the ground running in 2016 with our goals and objectives identified, positions filled to support those goals, and our value streams ready to execute their activities.

2016 ASQ Lean and Six Sigma Conference

February 29 – March 1
in Phoenix, AZ

Theme: Leadership at Every Level

We all strive to achieve results, and each of us strives to sustain the results we gain. There are a lot of factors that play into the level of success or failure that organizations achieve, whether it be the culture we work in, how aligned our efforts are, or the ability we have to deal with and mitigate risk. But out of all the factors at play, leadership is among the most critical. Studies show that anywhere from 50 to 95 percent of improvement programs fail. There are differing opinions as to just how high that number is, but also overwhelming consensus that leadership is a key component in avoiding such failures. Leadership through action, leadership with purpose, and leadership at all levels of an organization are critical to achieving and sustaining results.

The efforts made to embrace and implement lean and Six Sigma methodologies can provide individuals with the tools they need to achieve results. However, sustaining those results is often a challenge that requires commitment, a culture of improvement, and most of all leadership. It requires leadership that goes beyond the top of the organization and spreads out to all levels of it; and it involves leadership that is both nurtured and sustained. Session proposals are being reviewed and the program should be available at asq.org/conferences/six-sigma/index.html by the end of October 2015.

Technical Communities Council/Section Affairs Council Meeting

The Technical Communities Council and Section Affairs Council will be meeting in Milwaukee, WI, November 6 – 7, 2015. This meeting provides orientation for new member leaders along with educational and networking events. A number of topics such as innovation, social media, and new technologies embraced by ASQ will be discussed. This is a wonderful opportunity for member leaders at both the section and division level to share information and ideas.

SharePoint and ASQ LED Website Updates

The LED organization is evolving into more efficient technologies by rolling out an updated website (www.asqled.org) as well as a brand new SharePoint site. Both of these technology platforms will help the division enable each value stream to achieve their objectives, improve communication among the members, and improve collaboration of the value streams as well as with ASQ HQ. The updated website houses information on each value stream and hosts the webinars and newsletters. It also includes lean tools that visitors can review and includes mechanisms to enable communication among members and visitors.

The SharePoint site will be used to house all of the critical documentation and communication for the division leadership and array of division committees. The site will be used to house documents such as meeting minutes, business plans, A3 summaries, X matrices, conference information, and budget information. If you would like further information about the LED website or SharePoint, please contact Brian Galli, ASQ LED technology support process chair, at brianj.galli@gmail.com.

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Upcoming Webinars

October

“Wiremold: A Classic Lean Case Study”

October 14, 12:30 p.m. CDT

Join Bob Emiliani, the author, as he describes the authoritative and practical lean implementation manual that will help guide managers on their journey. You will learn how the management team at Wiremold applied lean principles and practices to acquisitions process, engineering, finance, human resources, marketing, operations, sales, and throughout the value stream with suppliers, intermediate customers, and end-use customers. You’ll be amazed at the financial and nonfinancial results they achieved.

“Everything you need to know about a lean transformation is explained between these covers.”
– James P. Womack, chair and founder of the Lean Enterprise Institute, talking about “Better Thinking, Better Results.”

Click on the link to register now. https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8302764514158411778

November

“Building a Plan for Every Part”

Tentative
Building a plan for every part (PFEP) is one of the most effective ways to create standardization in an ordering and delivery process and optimize material flow. Breakthrough results in on-time delivery, coverage, and cost reduction can be achieved through this discipline, but how do you do it? In this one-hour webinar learn the critical components of PFEP that will ensure delivery of the right part, at the right time, in the right quantity.
Volunteers Wanted! Contact membership chair Matt Jones at matt@optimumoutput.com if interested in volunteering.
Please consider the environment. Do you really need a paper copy of this newsletter? Please send a message to jbecker@asq.org with “Electronic Only” in the subject line.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

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COME SEE US AT WCQI!
Please come by our booth, introduce yourself, say hello, and hear about the conference networking event that the LED is sponsoring.

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For submissions or questions about multiple ad discounts, contact Scott Smith, swsmith111@gmail.com.