

Hello everyone. Welcome to the Washington State Government Lean for Dummies book review.

I'm at the Gov.'s office of accountability and performance.

I'm glad you joined us today.

Each week we are reviewing one chapter of the Lean for Dummies book and on our current schedule, we are still on track to be done by May 29.

As you can see, from the schedule, each week we are fortunate to have a special guests join us.

Our special guest this week is Karyn Ross. It's a privilege to have you join us once again. I will put your flyer up to introduce you.

But test your audio Karyn, can you talk on the conference?

Karyn: Yes I am here. Thanks for having me back. I enjoyed last time and am looking forward to this time.

Darrell: We are glad to have you back. For those that were not with us on chapter 4, Karyn is with Zürich North America and a partner in the partnership program and has been a lot of fun to work with and learn so many things from you, it's a pleasure to have you begin today.

Just a reminder, we record these WebEx sessions and post the recordings on the website.

There is a link to it in the presentation. And this information is available 24/7 so you can watch the recordings or navigate the presentation on your own if you want to review the materials.

The purpose of this book review is to help you understand more about Lean so you are ready to actively participate in your agency. There are lots of things you can do to get the most out of the session and a couple are listed here on the screen. One of the most important is not to hop in and listen but to talk to other people about what you are learning and many of you are in conference rooms around the state, having dialogue afterward.

That's a fantastic way to do it. During the session, everyone is on me. Please use the chat feature if you have a question and select, everyone, in the drop-down box so all facilitators can see the question you submit.

If you haven't done so already, please answer the poll questions. The name of your city and the number of people participating at your location.

If you would like to dig into the course information, the objectives, more detail, in terms of learning objectives, it is in the presentation. Please navigate it, we won't take you through it during every session. We just point out the fact that it is there for those who may not have seen it before.

So, let's get into reviewing chapter 12. I will slide to that content.

This week, chapter 12, perfection tools.

The table of contents, as you can see here, the chapter starts with standardized work and then goes into improving with kaizen and visual management. And every day improvement tools and tools that are helpful for qualitative stuff.

Let's get into the key points for this chapter.

The first one is in this important concept of standardized work.

As you have heard before [inaudible] often referred to the father of the Toyota production Center said without standards there could be no improvement. Standardization is a predictable method for doing things. It is the current best way of doing the work everyone follows until we find a better way of working.

Once you find a better way of working, everyone follows the new current best way.

Of course, the best person to define the current best way is the person who does the work.

A very key concept throughout Lean thinking is getting down to the person who does the work to learn about how best to change the work of it's going to change to make improvements.

Karyn, I know you have done work at Zürich with a leave of absence process. Can you share with our participants how important those improvement efforts you made on that project?

Karyn: Absolutely. The first two bullet points a consistent predictable method of doing things, or the current best way. And the best person to define a standard is the person who does the work before we move back around to standards there can be no kaizen.

Zürich owns farmers insurance as well. We have four fabulous team members who take care of leave of absence for all of those 35,000 employees and as you can imagine, it's quite a job for them and they do a great job and it's one of the first process as we looked out for improvement because when you are on a leave of absence whether maternity leave or something else, we want that process to go smoothly for people.

We went to take a look at what was happening in a leave of absence process and one of the first things we did was [inaudible] the process. Before people who did the process had their own colored Post-it notes and they assumed all of them, is the process of putting someone on a leave of absence and returning them to work in the same way. Their task was to relay in the Post-it notes what they did in their work,

Under each other and of course if they were all doing the work exactly the same way, we would come up with the same number of Post-it notes.

What they were surprised to find out even though they stuck together in a small area, was that each of them did the work in a totally different way.

When they saw that on the process flow map, they were really, really surprised because they assumed they did the work exactly the same way. If I do the work this way, somebody else is going to do it this way as well. So what we found out was that we did not have a consistent predictable method of doing the work and of course where we had been was variation in the results. So every time we do work we perform a small plan to check experiments because we don't know that there's going to be a standard that we are all doing the work the same way. We can't know what results we should expect or if we get results different than what we expect where we should look for that. So a consistent predictable method of doing things the current best way is absolutely totally important. Our team of fabulous people who work on the process, once they saw they had an outstanding process the next thing they did was they got together and discussed all different things in the process and they came up with one-way that they all agreed upon that they would try to do this process. They agreed they would all do it the same way and they would see what the results are in when they actually did it the same way, they would know if they did not get the result they expected, they could look for that in the process. That loops us back to the first point that until they had a standard, predictable way to do the work, they could not think of what improvements they could put in place because they did not understand what was happening correctly.

Darrell: That's a great example, Karyn, and I'm glad you're using that today because I think as we talked before, it brings throughout this chapter what you did at Zürich with a leave of absence process. I think we find that things same thing in state government. When we bring people together that have similar expectations and ask them to talk about how the work goes or map the workout, people are surprised like your folks there that we can improve it. Let's move on to the next key point. The guiding rules for standardized work. This is on page 238 on the Lean for Dummies book. The list of guiding rules for standardized work, there are five rules that can govern your approach or help you in implementing standard work. Since one of the main goals is to keep employees safe, the first rule is about defining work procedures that optimize people rather than machines. Machines are meant to assist people to do the work not the other way round. If you want to find a good candidate for standardized work, a great place to work is for work performed repeatedly. Or where things are repetitive and the same work happens over and over. So the second rule is to standardize all repetitive work. Where you have equipment involved in the process, picture it is kept in good working order. Good maintenance prevents delays. When they equipment is not available because it does not have proper maintenance, you are inviting the opportunity to be delayed and not deliver on time or keep your pace. So the third rule is keep equipment and systems in good working condition. The fourth rule is about making standard easily accessible and visible so it's easy to see when variations occur. That's the real point of visual management to make sure you can see when things are not going according to the plan or current best way. The fifth rule is to revise regularly. Karyn, how important is the idea of revising regularly in your work as their and this project in particular?

Karyn: It's really important. For our leave of absence team, what we did when we all came together was put together our first version where everybody got a flow of that to help hang up at their desk. They didn't do that just to follow the steps because they got used to the new steps after awhile, but they had at their desk to use when they wanted to make revisions. Remember, back on the first page, we know the way we do our work is the best way we know how to do it today but as they were working and talking and following these new standardized process, they would come up with other ideas to try and then one of them would take the workflow they had to their desk, they would write down the change and take it to their supervisor and the supervisor would revise that standard for them and give it back to them. So they were constantly working on it. [inaudible] has another great thing and that is, and what he means is that if we try something in the morning and it does not work, don't wait till the afternoon to change it. We want to run quick cycles and try things out so our standard is only the best way we know how to do it now but we should look for improvement in trying things and that way we are constantly revising our standards and creating standardized work which we can document. And run the whole cycle again. That's part of the work process and become part of their standardize work as well.

Darrell: Good. So actually getting to standardize work, what is the current best way we are all following and the next mindset we have to get in, in terms of the change is looking for opportunities to improve that all the time? Which I think requires you to think about your work in terms of the tasks being and experiment. Did the task turn out the way I expected it to and if not we are in the cycle about why not and what can we do to improve it? In my experience in state government, the new concept or what's new in terms of concept forces shortening the life cycle of [inaudible] down to really quick. Rather than thinking of it as giant improvement products that span months or years sometimes. That's what we encourage everyone to do. The next key point on slide for in the presentation, the six steps for implementing standardize work. As you can see these are not complicated steps. Or concepts. Check your equipment, and the time it takes to do work. Compared to the time it is opposed to take. Those are basic ideas. Checking the amount of work in process that you have in looking for ways to reduce or minimize how much work and process there is in your activity. Posting your standard work where it can be seen by those that do the work and measuring your performance. Making adjustments quickly when you find there is a new current best way. Karyn, how did you implement standard work in terms of that leave the absence process there?

Karyn: One of the things that we did and you have to remember as well as will repost the standards, if not only for the team members to see. It's for the supervisors or team lead to see you guys often times in our world of a leave of absence the team members who do the work, they have to process all the different transactions from lines on a report they get. They have to be processing constantly, otherwise they won't make their time to do this. The supervisors should also be able to see that standardize work and be able to come and see exactly if people are following the flow. Where are we in the process? In our part of a leave of absence process, we need certain things to happen by certain times of the day so he can see that flow posted as well, and say okay it's 10 AM and everyone should be here but people are not here, he can start the problem-solving process with them. They don't have to actually stop their work to do that. Standard work is a living document and I think the most important thing here is that just an update. Do it quickly, make a normal, if something isn't working come, try something. It will work or not work but you will learn from doing it and you can choose to adopt that if it works. You can adjust or abandon it to what we want to do is keep running those cycles and updating our standards.

Darrell: That brings up a good question, Karyn, in terms of, I get the idea I am supposed to go out this frequently and rapidly. But what does that really mean? How rapid is too rapid? I get that question a lot and one of our participants just asked that question, once standardized work is established, how much time should you let go before you start to look at revisions?

Karyn, can you answer that concept there? How much, let's try the current best way, should we engage in before we are looking at a new current best way?

Karyn: I think the thing is honestly, it depends on your process. It depends on the development of your people. If it is working for you and you are checking to make sure you are getting the results you want, somebody at some point because we're all smart and creative people, will have an idea to try something. So let's try something and make it better. Someone says, right now we are taking this into the system here but maybe if we type it here, it will have this effect. So go ahead and try it. When you are checking, if you find your standards are not meeting expectations or there are problems happening in your process, the process is slipping, then try things quicker. Have some formal problem solving process. Come up with a number of options. Try one, see what you get, try the next one, see what you get. I think it would also depend on what your profit is asking you to do to.

Darrell: That is always a legitimate answer. It depends because you have to come to a clear graph of the current state and what your situation is so there's no hard and fast rule about how much time can go by before you make improvements. I think that's a great guideline that you offer there, Karyn. When it's something in your process that you are not getting the expected results or it's not working or it's not coming in on time, you should look at fixing those right away or coming up with a better best way to solve that problem. On the other hand, when you find opportunities to improve that are not driven by a problem that maybe adding value or something a customer might be happier with, improving the process and not wait, maybe think about the timing and if this is the right time to throw that in there. I appreciate that question from the participant. And you weighing in on the answer.

Karyn: Can I say one more thing? We are all learning along the way. The only way we learn is by trying. Practice Lean and the more times that you have the opportunity to revise your standards, the more you learn the internally. Are we going to quickly or going too slowly? So to the person that asked the question, don't be afraid to try something because there is no failure and you will check the results and you only have the opportunity for learning. So go ahead and try and learn and what a great question.

Darrell: This shift in the mindset is failure is a good thing. Things going wrong are a good thing. They point to places to make improvements. The next key point, I will ask you before we had this one for those following along in the book, I did not make key points for the event section cause I was covered back in chapter 9. The next point we will go to is about visual management tools. Visual management tools help you see if things are running the way they should be or not.

Karyn, I know visual management was an important piece of the leave of absence improvement effort you did. Maybe you could describe what visual management you implemented in that effort?

Karyn: Basically, everything we have here on this key point slide and on signaling device display boards cross training charts, we really use them all. When we think of it, we think of some kind of sound or signal to communicate important status. It can be a potential failure but it can also remind us of things to do. We have four people doing a leave of absence process and there were different times in the process they actually needed to be doing different things. So what we did was something so simple as to have people set a timer on their watch that would go off at a certain time so people heard that and said, okay I know 10 minutes from now I need to change from this activity. If I'm behind I need to let somebody know I am behind. Any kind of signaling device that we have and not only did it work great to keep people on track in the leave of absence, it was fun for people. They felt excited they were able to participate even by setting [inaudible]. For display boards, we instituted who did the work and figured out how to do all the things. They created display boards to show how many lines on a leave of absence report they had to do. How many transactions they had input. How many e-mails they had in the morning that they had to work on during the day, how many phone calls they got. They kept track of those on a

production board and didn't have any kind of fancy electronic board. We just had a late motherboard you could write on and wipe off and they did that on a daily basis and their supervisor when they came around could see where people were at. Their supervisor knew that this person was ahead or this person was a little behind. They could adjust and someone could take over. Those things worked very well for them and they have all kinds of quality dashboards so they can now, a year later, look at each defect that they make it a customer service call about. They can trace it back to the actual check in line and use that for improvement. [inaudible] charts as well, different people are learning different skills, they would all like to be able to do all parts of the process so if someone is the way someone can take over. We basically had a very fun time with divisional management. They have adopted a pig which is an exercise we do, they adopted that as a mascot and have pictures of pigs all over the place.

Darrell: That's the key word there. Making work fun. Let's go on to everyday improvement tools. In the slide there is a list that starts on page 250 through 258. List of everyday improvement tools the kind of tools you can use all the time. You can use them everyday improvement tools. We won't go through each one. Given our time they Karyn, do you have a favorite tool on the list or one used more frequently than others?

Karyn: Absolutely but my all-time favorite tool is the check sheet and that's my favorite because it can be used at any time you collect all kinds of data, you don't need a computer you just need a piece of paper and a pencil and a quick story from Zürich over here. We had a feeling there was a problem and one of our processes that we could not find enough people to sign forms we needed to happen people were spending too much time running around looking for them. So we ask the people who has to look for the signer to use her calendar as a check sheet for one month to put a tick mark on the day she could not find someone to sign a form. After we looked at the data at the end of 30 days, we found out she could not only find a person to times do we realize we did not have a problem. Maybe there used to be a problem and we felt like there was still a problem but when we looked at the data by putting a tick mark on a calendar, we could see there was not a problem. And that we should focus our efforts somewhere else.

Darrell: That's a great story that illustrates the power of collecting data and data collection not having to be complicated or something that requires a change process through IT departments. Very simple things like control charts, piece of paper at your desk, hash marks and counting up over time, and you have data you can use to make decisions like you just said. You can realize you don't have a problem and you can look for the next opportunity. The last key point slide is a list of tools. Qualitative tools. We only have a minute left here Karyn, let's do the same question. Do you have a favorite tool here one used more frequently?

Karyn: I am a fan of the affinity diagram is as easy to do. A fun way that you may want to try this is take all the things you want to move into buckets like a brainstorm group times, solutions, whatever it is. Lay them all on the table. Nobody can talk for three minutes. Set the timer and have everybody put them into the buckets they belong in. Once they are in a buckets, look at them and see what you want to label the bucket. It's a fun exercise and allows everybody freethinking and you will get interesting results.

Darrell: I do to get them quicker than the other way it is normally most often done where there is lots of discussion about the bucketing.

Karyn: Absolutely, because nobody can argue and once it's in the bucket, you find in general people tend to [inaudible] is a very interesting process.

Darrell: Very good. That's all the time we have for today. We appreciate everyone joining us. Karyn, any final words of advice?

Karyn: Absolutely. Keep going, keep working, keep learning, keep working on standardize work because doing this is what develops people and people development is what we are all about in the Lean.

Darrell: Thank you very much for joining us today, Karyn. We're looking forward to doing it again and continuing to learn for new. Thanks for joining us we will see you next week as we review Chapter 13. Have a great week.