



R&R Newsletter

Reducing Risk/Removing Waste

ISO Support Group

January 2008 - Issue 1

An ISO 9001:2000
Registered Company

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LEAN JOURNEY...

Strategy 1:

- Isolate the Value Stream

Strategy 2:

- Specifying Value

Strategy 3:

- Mapping the Value Stream

Strategy 4:

- Making the Stream Flow

Strategy 5:

- Letting Customers Pull Value

Strategy 6:

- Seeking Perfection

CAN LEAN HELP?

Want to know if Lean applies to your business? Read about our Lean Assessment Service

[HERE](#)



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accepted!

Removing Waste:

In this Issue under the heading **Removing Waste** I'll be covering the topic of **Lean Operations – Example: Century Furniture**

The following is a brief overview of a Lean implementation story:

Century Furniture, Hickory, NC... is a maker of fine, high-end home furnishings and is doing what many view as "the impossible"... it is keeping its factories open. It is one of the last, lonely holdouts in the area that proudly calls itself "The Furniture Capital of America." About two-thirds of its wood manufacturing competitors have closed up shop and moved their manufacturing to China. "It's not hard to understand why so many manufacturers have made the choice to move overseas," says Robert J. Maricich, president and CEO of Century Furniture. "The average skilled American worker earns 28 times what his counterpart in China earns. Factor in our escalating healthcare costs and our far more stringent governmental restraints and you can see the depth of the challenge." Below are some lessons they've learned so far...

When You Find Yourself in a Hole, Stop Digging... Take a long, hard, objective look at everything you're doing. If it doesn't add value or maximize efficiency, stop doing it. If the customer doesn't care about it, stop doing it. Rethink every process.

Take Action. You Cannot Afford to Wait for All the Facts... Knowing that uncertainty will always exist, be a confident decision maker. Don't fall prey to "analysis paralysis." Opportunities pass quickly and if you don't grab them quickly, someone else will.

Get Comfortable with Ambiguity... "When operating in a globalizing economy, there are few cut-and-dry rules; there is no clear right and wrong. Even if you don't make the wrong choice, you might not make the most "right" choice, either. Accept that fact."

Find Your Brilliance and Leverage It Relentlessly... Every company must decide what it does best – indeed, what it does better than anyone else – and infuse that brilliance into its entire operation.

Being All Things to All People Is the Golden Rule for Failure... Ultimately, we realized we couldn't be competitive in all areas, so we cut them out. In the end, we walked away from 15 percent of our business."

Cut the Fat. Leave the Muscle. Get LEAN!... Century embraced lean manufacturing as a strategy, and focused on getting rid of all waste, eliminating anything the customer wasn't willing to pay for. It streamlined and reconfigured its upholstery plants, reducing the distance an average piece of upholstery traveled from 908 feet to 522 feet. "That's a 42% reduction that results in the elimination of 1,300 miles each year."

To view more information on this example (and others)... you can visit our Newsletter page at our website to view the complete article:

www.isosupport.com/newsletters/newsletters.htm

PS: Don't forget to look at the Q&A section of this Newsletter for some final thoughts on this Lean implementation example.

PUBLICATIONS

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the manuals & books that we've recently published:

- ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Manuals
- "The 3 Biggest Mistakes People Make with ISO 9001"

TRAINING:

- Process/Value Stream Mapping
- 5S for Service/Mfg
- Lean Essentials/Kaizen
- Business Modeling and Performance Measure'ts
- Root Cause Analysis and Corrective Action
- Mistake Proofing
- Continual Process Improvement
- Strategic/Business Planning
- Malcolm Baldrige Training
- Privacy Program Training (PIPEDA)

****View [agendas](#) at our website****

Email Tim.. [HERE](#)

For more information on training provided by ISG on Process Improvement/Lean (Manufacturing/Office), please visit our website at www.isosupport.com. Once there, you will also find information about the following:

"Process Improvement/Lean Assessment: Can Lean help you?"

If you want to find out if Lean applies to your business, visit our website and read about our Lean Assessment Service by going to:

http://www.isosupport.com/services/lean/srvcs_pi_lean.htm

"The 3 Biggest Mistakes People Make with ISO 9001"; ISO

9001:2000 Tips, Tools and Techniques

Click here: <http://www.isosupport.com/books/books.htm>

If you enjoyed reading our previous ISO Newsletters you'll find that this book contains many of the practical approaches and advice that I've discussed in these Newsletters over the past 5 years.

Q: What are the "lessons learned" from this example?

A: Here they are...

- Foster a Sense of Ownership - How do you instill an entrepreneurial mindset in your employees? First, says Maricich, ensure that your employees literally own a stake in their company. (Century does so via its ESOP.) But just as importantly, share your vision with your employees every chance you get. "The only way to create organizational clarity is to communicate the same message at all levels of your company," he says. "Whether I am talking to upholsterers or board members, I make sure my message is the same: This is the vision. These are the initiatives. These are the action steps."
- Give Customers What They Really Want - Are you giving your customers what they really want, or are you giving them what you want them to want? Just because you are in love with your own products and services doesn't mean the customer will be. Do continuous market research. Ask the customer what he or she wants.

Until next time...

Tim Renaud

Helping Business Professionals Reduce Risk and Remove Waste!

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Tim Renaud, P.Eng., B.A.Sc., is a senior trainer and consultant with the ISO Support Group. His business experience covers over twenty-two years with both small and large organizations within various industries. He began consulting in 1992 and achieved ISO 9001 Registration for ISO Support Group in Oct/1998. Specific areas of expertise include training and consulting on installing ISO Management Systems, as well as implementing Process Improvement Strategies, always with a focus on reducing risk and removing waste (becoming Lean). Association memberships include the American Society for Quality (ASQ) and the Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO).