**Future State Beliefs Require Future State Behaviors**

**#1 Principle of Standard Work: It is a VERB**

It is time to take a deeper dive on some of the “what it takes” side of getting the most out of Standard Work; making it meaningful; making the connection with the socio-cultural climate of the organization; and finally, creating a state of readiness for the culture to change to the ways of LEAN and Standard Work. There is plenty of material out there to help with change management. Change management shows up as a common component in LEAN coaching books, which I find comforting from the standpoint that LEAN is being presented with the idea that organizations are facing a comprehensive change from their current operating system to the LEAN Operating System, as it pertains to a “LEAN journey”. It is important not to assume that change will happen without struggle or it will just happen automatically. Operating management cannot assume that they can call for change and then let the shop floor work it out. Whole careers revolve around the science and management of the very change required to transform to the LEAN operating system. I would recommend that anyone about to embark on a change journey explore some of the change management material available out there. I won’t cover much of it here (except the occasional comment). Managing the change is imperative. The tools of the Toyota Production System simply work. That point does not require debate. The primary question is whether or not the ownership / management in your organization can create an environment that will let the tools flourish!

**Future State Behaviors and Future State Beliefs**

There is a component to change that I think is reflected in the values that support Standard Work as an activity. Standard Work is not a “to do” to just get through and check off the list. It is ongoing in every way, every minute of every day. It is the entry level of understanding and improving a process. The journey never ends.

**Bob, “Toyota has been trying to get CT=TT for 60 years. They just cannot get there, and, THEY LOVE IT.!”**

It is the way through to linking value creating activities. It is the second, third, fourth, fifth generation of continuous improvement of the process. It is the stability of the percent load representing the customer. Standard Work is all these things at multiple stages of the above iterations throughout the LEAN enterprise- but only if there is a full complement of behaviors to support all the ETERNAL goodness available to the diligent. Without the action to back up the above, it is only rhetoric. There is only the promise of abject failure without doing the work. Practicing Future State Behaviors creates sustainable Future State Beliefs.

**A Case for Action and the “Gotta Want It”**

This would be a good time to check in with your company’s expectations for your LEAN journey. All companies need a “case for action”; a case for change. The indicators must be exposed and out in the open. Are you not meeting the demand or expectations of your customer? Do you have bottlenecks to break? Are you drowning in inventory and other cost / waste? Are you hoping for total salvation? These questions all point to the many symptoms that result from wasteful processing and could differ from operation to operation. Folks get excited as they imagine what their companies could look like without some of that mire. However, I always like to warn that any success, even lukewarm, fractured, or dysfunctional success is the natural enemy of change. As obvious as the need to fix the companies problems are (“when you say it that way”) it is all the easier to fall back on behaviors that seemed to work in the past rather than risk more chaos in trying to change. So, as I said, the change indicators had better be understood by all and acknowledgement that the desired state is something decidedly different than occurs in the present; in terms of the outcome; in terms of what behavior are currently performed to support. It is a simple model to imagine. The company’s Case for Action must engage the company’s specific desire to be different than it was a year ago, a month ago, a week ago. The Case for Action must engage the company’s specific belief that the best the old ways of doing things can get us is lukewarm at best and lukewarm is death.

**Fixing Things Manufactures More Time to Fix Things**

While there might be enough energy to get started on a LEAN journey supplied by the aforementioned list, the really important follow up question is, “Where does the company expect to get all the manpower energy required for the change?” That little angle is driven by “Future State Behaviors”: that is, ONGOING activities that support the new order getting done- FOREVER! In the case of Standard Work, I am talking about taking a process biased view of working on the shop floor and favoring time out with the operators over time in a meeting; as a matter of prevailing company values. If the motivation for getting these new activities done doesn’t come from the internalized WANTS of the company driven by its strategic direction plan, then rounding people up for time observations will be like pulling teeth. Everyone will feel too busy to get out and do that. The key, as an organization is to be prepared to choose differently those things necessary to run the business and as you learn more about LEAN, those things that are perceived as being necessary to run the business will change. People aren’t required to babysit inventory where inventory has been eliminated or put to point of use. Folks don’t have to show up with a forklift where material no longer requires handling or moving. The banishment of waste frees up human time to work on the process, and I’m not just talking about direct labor time. The more waste gets driven out of the process and the more visual the process is made, the more capable the local operators become at managing the coming and going of material; become the drivers of “Stop to Fix”; the presentation to the customer. All this serves to free up the time of support folks for **real time problem solving**. That is high horsepower time, right there. That is a key level of talent to get convinced that the new activities out on the shop floor, the Standard Work supporting activities, are the right ones to pursue. **These folks are often times harder to get to turn from their former behaviors because they are used to surviving by them.**

To be clear, by “behaviors”, I am referring to the physical “what I do to get my job done” behaviors. That may entail, printing a report and then counting parts at all junctures. Maybe that means you get on the system and check for material availability. Or maybe you log in and then it’s off to the production meeting for the next hour and a half (if you’re lucky). There are the behaviors associated with problem solving or non conformance investigation. In the old environment (at least in some of mine), investigating a non conformance would be done from a corrective action meeting and inspection documents would be traced back to find out who did the work. **In the new future state, those same questions would get driven back to the process and the Standard Work.** Instead of going to the meeting, a group displaying new future state behaviors will sooner be drawn to the work area. Instead of pouring over reports and past tense circumstantial evidence, a group might elect to observe the process in action to see how it would be possible to make bad parts and to fix it so it can’t happen in process anymore. There should be a developed and fostered bias for the later kind of activity that is located around where the action is and involves directly the process and those engaged in it. In my experiences, the former process tended to lead to the operator, or more specifically, is designed to seek out the operator with all assumptions, appraisals, and judgments in tow. I have seen organizations take the results of this approach and resolve to attempt to train operators to adapt and overcome out of control processes in a conscientious way (an oxymoron if you ask me), before even getting to the processes to see why performing them flawlessly is never possible. The resolve to seek out the Standard Work and conduct all Continuous Improvement discussions around that campfire is the new future state behavior. An organization cannot just apply lip service to that, an organization is going to have to physically practice DOING THAT in order to internalize and make it a habit. In so doing, the goodness of Standard Work will come out. So practicing future state behaviors will serve to form the future state beliefs that support the LEAN journey which is driven by Standard Work. This is in alignment with and buttressed by the Standard Motive of the company to WANT to be better and WANT to do that by eliminating waste through Standard Work. This serves to form a Standard Response and (hopefully) becomes the Standard Attitude of the organization towards the processes, problem solving, and Continuous Improvement. Standard Work + Standard Motive + Standard Response = Standard Attitude. Once a group of folks can start to align the components discussed above, the “who and how much time should we spend” questions become a no brainer to answer. Who = everybody available; and how much time = ALL OF IT!

**Bob notes:**

**SWCS has the TT line = OTD (customer satisfaction), labor (cost), quality, safety, SWS = inventory (operating working capital), safety, quality. WHAT MORE IS NECESSARY. Chihiro Nakao (O.G. Shingijutsu Sensei; ref: “LEAN Thinking”), “Bob San, only two documents required to run factory” (SWCS and SWS).**

As I think more and more about the activities surrounding Standard Work, it becomes clear that those activities set in motion “real time problem resolution” or the old “Stop to Fix” battlecry. Stop to Fix is a LEAN principle that has strong roots in the standard motive-response-attitude idea laid out above, but without having those standard attitudes firmly ingrained, stopping anything to fix it in too many production environments is conventionally counter-intuitive. “Making the shipment/month” rules way too many roosts out there. Bob used to tell us (and he would preface with, *“Be careful how I say this”*) “I don’t care about ***that*** shipment. I care about ***ALL*** the shipments”. I think what he was trying to say is that engaging in the future state behaviors is painful at first but they lead to something better at a global level, not just a local level. So, we have to engage in the practice of performing new future state behaviors.

What might some future state behaviors look like for those who don’t have something immediately in mind? I can tell you what to start with. Do you perform any tasks worthy of writing Standard Work for? I bet you do! I am currently serving as an Advanced Manufacturing Engineer which means I calculate tool path and tooling costs for quoting new business for my company. The other engineers here think that “Advanced” is synonymous to “special” in the sense that I should have my mittens sewn to my sleeves, but really, I do quoting (which I could never do with mittens on) in advance of the engineers in the shop working on it (get it; “advanced” manufacturing engineer?). We have an expectation of lead time to respond to the customer that impacts how long I have to do my job. In my case, we decided that I need to return a RFQ (with committed costs) in 20 working days. That lead time is largely dictated by elements out of our control like seeking material and fixture quotes on the outside. However, it became clear to us a couple of years ago that our contemporary customers were asking for quotes much sooner than that. So we devised a quote process that covers all the elements that we control and figured out how to do it in 5 working days- then I wrote the Standard Work for it. I perform to the expectation and track my performance to it. Granted, a great deal of my process is administrative, but that doesn’t mean that there aren’t actual tasks that I perform in deliberate sequence and on a time basis. In fact, each time I execute my job, I have performed a cycle and each time I perform the cycle, I have an opportunity to ask why whenever something gets in the way and fix it. And rewrite the Standard Work.

An individual could write Standard Work for any task or duty; process or administrative. Then, go to the trouble of posting the Standard Work that they wrote right there where they perform the task. Keep the documents current and create a visual control (more on this in subsequent chapters) to indicate when the cycle doesn’t go as planned so it can be fixed. Doing these activities will more than get a body started with internalizing Standard Work activities and establishing Future State Behaviors.

Here is another idea to help build Future State Beliefs. Find a task to do in service of the shop floor and create Standard Work around that. I was looking for just such a task to help promote Future State Behaviors during a LEAN journey where I work now. After a really valuable maintenance technician left the company and it became clear that ownership / management was not going to replace him, I decided that I would fill a mop bucket with floor wash solution and walk around the shop to help some of the operators keep some of the leaks in their machines clean. I knew that they were strapped and just could not get to their mops every day, so I just wanted to help. At first, my new activity was sort of random but I very quickly identified a time if day that I could typically be spared, which turned out to be 7:0a every morning. SOOOoooo….. I hit the floor by 7:0a and toured with my mop and bucket. Several wonderful things happened as a result of my daily tour. A message of a renewed value towards cleanliness by ownership / management was communicated through the workforce and they responded by upping their efforts to keep their areas cleaner (by choice, not mandate). Operators regularly shared ideas with me about problems that they deal with in their areas. I came to realize that I could impact “Total Productive Maintenance” more with a mop and bucket than any PM schedule alone can. Other good things happened over the couple of months that I initially started to sustain the behavior and I wrote the basic Standard Work for what I was doing every day. Then, something dawned on us during a discussion of safety; the only metric that we paid attention to was a days since last lost time accident board, which (thankfully) was into four digits. That really just means nobody cut anything off or was maimed (again, grateful), but the score was so perennially good that it didn’t drive safety. We found that we really had not even a basic safety program. I took a look at the Standard Work I had written and was able to make safety related elements to be performed: Every day it is assured that any fluid hazard between or within 48” of all the yellow aisles lines is cleaned up and any trip hazard, wood, debris larger than a couple of wooden matches is picked up. When viewed from that perspective, it became this company’s first proactive safety program defined by Standard Work and monitored by a very clever visual control. I do this mop tour every day. It does take up about 5-7% of my total time available, but ownership / management know exactly how much resource is going into the program (how long via the Standard Work) and they know just what result can be expected from the process (how safety effective via the Standard Work). The owner has decided to place a high value in driving safety and cleanliness (very wisely), so my 5-7% is worth the time and I make it happen. It has been nearly a year since I started the original mop tour, six months since I rewrote the Standard Work from the safety perspective and I maintain a visual control. I am sort of my own choir that I preach to, but I did learn several very important things in the course of sustaining this Future State Behavior (noted above) to internalize. By the way, none of the shop floor employees question my resolve in the new order or my ability to do what I say I am going to do and hold to it. I have developed a trust with them and credibility for what I am trying to accomplish there on the shop floor and in the organization at large. **“High powered executives may not relate to this example.” Warns Bob.** My good friend has much more experience working to convince the powerful folks in charge to take the LEAN journey. In my journey, I have more often showed up in the middle of a LEAN shop floor mess that was typically the creation of insufficient commitment; organizations that never showed up to do the work- organization that never actually endeavored to establish and sustain Future State Behaviors to support the LEAN class room / book concepts. Bob’s comment inspires me to say something here. I think the manufacturing world must enter a new era of LEAN understanding if LEAN is to survive. I do believe that in the beginning, it was very important to appeal to the captains of industry to take up the mantle of the LEAN message and as such, the message had to be tailored to the folks that Bob is referring to above, however, I never read anything that led me to believe Ohno said one could run their company by remote control or from the board room. I have read where Ohno’s climb through the ranks of Toyota was actually impeded by his belief to the contrary. So mine is a simple message, if you are so high on the corporate ladder that you can’t imagine having personal contact to the process floor, spending actual time as a function of your new Future State Behaviors for the sake of your LEAN journey, then you better be able to imagine that someone else, in fact a whole layer of folks, just below you, ACTUALLY WILL have time to show up, make contact, do the work as an ongoing specific requirement of establishing Future State Behaviors.

So there it is! See? Not so hard to find creative ways to work in service of the processes. It can be very cathartic as well, but mostly, it will help create Future State Beliefs.