

NEWSLETTER

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LEAN IS ABOUT Respect, Empowerment, and Engagement



At the cornerstone of LEAN is RESPECT. Respect for people, products, and processes. In his book, *Gemba Walks*, author and Lean authority Jim Womack points out the importance Toyota places on Respect in its TPS system, which is the foundation of the LEAN movement.

In the TPS (Toyota Production System) an Andon cord or system EMPOWERS non-management (production line) workers with the authority to stop the production line because of a suspected quality issue assuring quality at the source. This process is one of the ways that LEAN assures Quality, by address quality at the source. When the quality issue is addressed the LEAN process would work to find the root cause by employing the 5-Whys method or an analytical method to uncover and correct the cause to assure the issue didn't reappear.

Employee Empowerment requires Employees to be fully Engaged. They become owners of the function or process they are performing for the company. They are accountable to themselves, the company, their coworkers and ultimately the customer for the quality of their work.

Respect, Empowerment, and Engagement are easily identified in the philosophy of LEAN companies employ when it comes to placing blame. Mirroring the TPS PHILOSOPHY, we look first at the flawed process, not at the individual doing the work. This encourages and empowers team members to identify flaws in the system so that they might be fixed before they become a bigger issue.

Another impressive practice that the TPS/Lean employs is the supervisors don't fix problems directly. They instead coach/train team members to solve the problem themselves. This may take more time initially, but the investment pays huge dividends in the long run!

It is said that a company's greatest asset is their employees. Given that fact, it is imperative that we treat our employees/team members with the respect they deserve.

When we do, they will be the Engaged and Empowered workforce we need to grow our companies to their fullest potential.



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BOSS Strapping is proudly manufactured in Wells, Texas with nearly 45 years of serving the lumber industry with woven products. From the yarn they use to the way they finish the product, quality assurance is within their control.



Jeff Tweten

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