

## **Jerry M. Wright, PE, MBA, LGC, LSSBB**

### **Master Black Belt**

Jerry grew up in Tucson, Arizona. He attended Arizona State University on a 4-year Regents Academic Scholarship. He enrolled as a Biomedical Engineer but switched majors to Electrical and then ultimately Mechanical Engineering. While still in his last 2 years of ASU, Jerry worked at local aerospace firm, Allied-Signal, now Honeywell Aerospace. He worked on turbine engine component design and testing. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering in the fall of 1987. Then he began his professional journey with Kimberly-Clark Corporation in Atlanta, GA in December, 1987.

During his 10 years with KCC, Jerry worked in R&D, Manufacturing Engineering, Maintenance, Operations and Project Management. After a year in the Roswell Headquarters, he transferred to Corinth, MS. A year after that, he transferred to Fullerton, CA. In 1993, Jerry earned his registered Professional Engineer (PE) credential from the state of California.

In 1995, Jerry was responsible for relocation of the global production of Kimwipes® Industrial Wipers from Memphis, TN to Fullerton, CA. This \$4.5 million project earned the Product Sector's best-in-class project management distinction. Later, while leading the Kleenex® tissue converting operations, his teams surpassed every productivity record in the company's tissue converting history, including the coveted 20,000+ tissue boxes per hour record for an entire shift.

In 1997, Jerry relocated to San Diego and he joined leading medical device maker DJO Global, Inc. By the end of 2001, DJO Global held an IPO and became stock ticker DJO on the NYSE. From 2001 until 2007, DJO was publicly traded and underwent a massive transformation from a traditional batch manufacturer to a lean, cellular manufacturing juggernaut. Jerry was one of the primary drivers and leaders of DJO's lean transformation. He helped grow the company from \$115 million to over \$1.2 billion in revenue as of 2013.

During that growth period, Jerry held leadership positions in Quality, Engineering and Operations. While Jerry was the Director of Operations at DJO, his Vista manufacturing site received **IndustryWeek Top Ten Best Plants, The Shingo Prize and the AME Manufacturing Excellence Award**. In 2007, the Blackstone Group took DJO Global private to integrate it with another medical device conglomerate. That year, Jerry was promoted to Vice President, Lean and Enterprise Excellence. His primary role was to transform the culture of the integrated companies to one of Lean and Continuous Improvement.

In 2009, Jerry was invited to be an instructor at UCSD for their certificate in Lean Enterprise. He moved into the Lead Instructor role there until 2015. That same year, SDSU invited Jerry to instruct classes for their Lean Certification program. He also taught Lean/Agile organizations for the Executive Perspective for Scientists and Engineers starting in 2010. In 2010, he was promoted to Senior Vice President of Lean and Enterprise Excellence with responsibility for California Operations and global oversight of the DJO Way, the company's way of doing business and promoting a lean culture.

After 16 years at DJO Global, Jerry left to form his own consulting firm, **LEANwRIGHT, Inc.** in 2013. During that same time, Jerry was the PPI Way Coach for Power Partners, an industrial transformer manufacturer in Athens, GA. Jerry helped transform the business from losing millions of dollars into making millions per year. Jerry led the company's Lean program and provided both leadership and engineering direction for the company's operations and technical services teams until it was sold in January of 2016.

Jerry has been a long-time volunteer for the Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME). He was President of the West Region for years, the Conference Chair for Chicago in 2012 and Chairman of the Board in 2015-2016. He was the interim Association President and CEO from October 2015 to April 2016. Jerry received his Lean Six Sigma Black Belt (LSSBB) in 2015 and became just the 7<sup>th</sup> person in the world to become Lean Gold Certified (LGC) by the Joint Certification Alliance in 2016. Jerry received his Master Black Belt certification from Lean Applications, Inc. in January 2018.

Jerry was also a contributing author to the *Lean Handbook* and is a regular speaker at industry events and conferences. He continues in his role as the Chair of the So Cal Lean Network, a network of more than 500 like-minded lean professionals that benchmark and hold regular Lean Sharing Events in Southern California. Jerry retired from teaching at both UCSD and SDSU in 2018. Jerry retired from his part-time consulting and business development role at South Dakota Partners in 2019. He still does training and consulting through LEANwRIGHT, Inc.

