

OPERATING PRINCIPALS

For any organization to be successful embedded within the organization is a suite of Operating Principals. In many cases they may not be documented but should be and widely communicated to all employees. For me an organization can be defined as a;

- Natural Work Group
- Department
- Facility
- Division
- Company

Now let us investigate some potential Operating Principals and the behaviours expected ...

Ensure that the Health and Safety of all people is the top priority
Have a learning, supportive, and cooperative culture dedicated to Continuous Improvement
Aggressively improve customer response time
Competitively produce at any volume and be flexible to any request
Have process measurements that contribute to business goals
Drive transformation process through knowledge and involved leadership
Define and understand roles and responsibilities
Optimize processes through balanced implementation of interdependent elements
Relentlessly pursue the elimination of waste

Ensure that the Health and Safety of all people is the top priority

Safety Programs can save lives and prevent injuries only if properly implemented and utilized within the organization.

Have a learning, supportive, and cooperative culture dedicated to Continuous Improvement

Opportunities for learning at all levels of the organization must be in place to develop the profound knowledge necessary to transform the organization through people, teamwork and a supportive as well as cooperative culture.

The transfer of knowledge, sharing of lessons learned and recognizing mistakes/errors as an opportunity to improve, are the foundation of the learning culture.

Aggressively improve customer response time

To increase the ability of the organization to respond to the changing global market, the organization must transition from traditional time-based process principals. Processes will need to continue to evolve to meet customer requests with quality outputs, with shorter lead-time and at a reduced cost with increased value-add content.

Have a learning, supportive, and cooperative culture dedicated to Continuous Improvement .

"Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow."

Ronald. E. Osborn

Where Lean Thoughts can become Reality

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Competitively produce at any volume and be flexible to any request

Paradigms regarding mass production must be replaced with time-based, mixed model, flexible systems. Equipment and people must be able to support changes in volume, changes in features within a product family and changes across families of products.

Have process measurements that contribute to business goals

A feedback system must reinforce the decisions people make based on a set of standard measures. Those metrics will cascade down from the business objectives to all levels of the organization.

Each individual or team will be free to focus on achieving their goals knowing how they support the overall business goals. Meaningful process measurements will drive overall performance improvement.

Drive transformation process through knowledge and involved leadership

Leadership must champion the creation of an environment for change that will gain the cooperative support of the entire organization. Leaders must ensure that a clear vision, appropriate skills, proper incentives, necessary resources and a realistic master plan are in place to create and sustain successful change.

Define and understand roles and responsibilities

Identification of the structure, roles and responsibilities required to implement process changes is the prerequisite to transformation. It is the role of the leader to define the boundaries of responsibilities so people clearly understand their level of authority.

People who understand their scope of control will be empowered to make decisions that are consistent with the overall business objectives, beliefs and values. This will lead to improved teamwork, communication and an engaged work force.

Optimize processes through balanced implementation of interdependent elements

Each element of your operating system supports and complements the other elements. Together they form an interdependent system. To successfully impact the business goals and to sustain the gains made, a balanced implementation approach must be taken.

Capability must be demonstrated in each interdependent element for the system to improve as a whole. Like a chain, the system will only be as strong as the “weakest” interdependent element.

Relentlessly pursue the elimination of waste

The continuous identification and elimination of “waste” in processes will reduce cost and lead-time, and improve the competitive position to ensure the organization’s future.

Wastes of correction, over-production, material movement, motion, waiting, inventory, and processing are to be continually driven out of every operation. The key to “relentless pursuit” is to go back a second time, a third time, etc..

Common sense would dictate that it is impossible to eliminate all waste at one tie. Therefore it is necessary to prioritize issues and address them as resource availability and capability dictate (i.e. skill set / experience). Consider issues from a flow perspective can help to establish these priorities due to the tendency of cost to follow flow.