

Problem Solving?

Go to the Work Place

The first step in problem solving is to be certain you have a good understanding of the current situation.

To ensure your solutions get to the root cause, you must understand the process where the problem initially occurred. When starting to diagnose a problem, don't rely on verbal reports to provide the details.

Go to the work area, observe the situation, solicit help from the people in the area, and collect hard evidence for yourself.

Just like any good detective, gather the facts first hand; it will help you gain a better understanding of the problem which, in turn, will allow you to better focus your solutions.

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**Go to 'Gemba',
Papa Smurf!**



Pictured above - A [not usually] bearded Jay Watson dons blue elastic gloves to validate critical dimensions and prepare shipment on the first composite test and 'fit-up' Flap Track Fairing, a component of a pre-production demonstrator wing.

Dateline: Sacramento, CA May 2012

AAR Corporation was selected by Bombardier Aerospace, Belfast, to design and manufacture light-weight composite flap track fairings for the wings of Bombardier's new C-Series aircraft.

With Lean Manufacturing and Process Improvement backgrounds, Jay was an integral part of the contracted Quality and Manufacturing Engineering start-up team located at the renovated McClellan Airpark hangars.

AAR Composites, located in Clearwater, Florida, USA, expanded its manufacturing capabilities with the 2010 opening of a west coast facility. The expansion provides additional capacity for autoclave, oven, resin transfer moulding (RTM) and vacuum assisted resin transfer moulding (VARTM) composites processes.

The word Gemba has been adopted by Japanese systems theorists from two Chinese words. Gem refers to specific work and Ba to the place.

Any organization concerned about quality must identify and support Gemba. The most important role of management is to support Gemba.

The customer defines the activities that are most important and the wise manager sets priorities accordingly.

"The function of Leadership is to produce more leaders not more Followers." - Ralph Nadar

R_x: One element of Process Excellence Development - Instilling a Managerial Attitude for Problem Identification and Resolution ...

NOTE: Our Total L6S Material [IP] Development Costs came in less than \$20,000.00

A3

The A3 Report 'hands-on' training workshop consisted of a 2-hour work-out with operating, technical, and supervisory personnel.

Goal of the event was to learn and apply the A3 form and format as the common methodology for idea capture, PDCA planning and communication. We utilized foundational information from the book: Managing to Learn by John Shook (\$50.00)

Learn more about A3 Problem Identification methodology at:

http://www.lean.org/WhoWeAre/NewsArticleDocuments/Sloan_review_mtl.pdf

<http://a3thinking.com/index.html> (another great resource)

"ASK THE EXPERT"

Although A3 can be utilized for almost every problem - a leading consultant, Art Smalley describes the use and level of A3 this way: There are easy, medium, and difficult problems in organizations. The A3 thinking process is universal but we can't always write a report for each and every problem.

Easy problems (sometimes referred to as "Just Do It's or JDI's) can often be solved by observation alone and "5 Why" type of thinking out loud or with a small group. For example oil leaked from a cylinder...the seal was worn. We replaced the seal, inspected other similar units, and adjusted our PM interval or something like that. These might be nice but probably are not going to get into an A3 report all the time.

Medium problems require some structure and tools to solve them. Just observation alone generally does not do the trick and data collection, testing, etc. is in order. Often these are great candidates for A3 reports as you will need to work on the problem for some extended period of time and need to communicate with others as you progress. A3 type reports make a lot of sense in these cases.

Harder cases are often very good for A3's as well. I am referring to those nagging problems that are chronic or sporadic and require a lot of work and effort to resolve. Some of these categories of issues may turn into a Lean/ Six Sigma Green Belt or Black Belt type of effort. Communication and methodical attack are paramount on these so something like an A3 is very useful to guide thinking and remember where we are in the process. Of course, various attachments to a single page A3 are likely generated in this case.

Alternatively in more general terms I like to see an A3 written for variety of reasons. Is the situation difficult enough to warrant using an A3 to provide structure? Will there be on-going discussion for some time so the report has communication value? Will a person be well served in terms of development by drafting an A3? Is there a good reason to document and capture the knowledge in some fashion?

Learn more about ART SMALLEY – bing or google "Art Smalley" -or- "The Art of Lean"

Checkout: <http://www.lean.org/whoweare/LeanPerson.cfm?LeanPersonId=49>

Rx: Process Excellence Development continued

Indoctrination to Lean Six Sigma Methodologies ...

Lean Enterprise (Kaizen Leader Development)

Essentially, the *kaizen* process is simply a problem solving methodology. Whether the improvement is an on the spot daily improvement, or a more formal week long *kaizen* blitz event (or rapid improvement workshop), the modules in this group walk you through the steps of making effective changes that stick.

This curriculum is comprehensive, and covers the entire *kaizen* process, including planning and follow-up. It is intended to be used to train project leaders who will be conducting *kaizen* events, but with minimal modification, can also be used to train project participants.

Goal was to have teaching materials that project leaders could learn and apply quickly without the dedicated use of a Black Belt or Master Black Belt, or at least use part-time.

Materials developed from Jeff Hajek [web-site] <http://www.velaction.com/> (\$250.00)

"A culture of continuous improvement is the outcome of 1,000 things done the right way."

Six Sigma Green Belt / Black Belt / Sponsor (Project Leader Development)

Curriculum from Open Source Six Sigma includes inclusive product suites, training materials and instructor guides; professionally formatted course manuals; Black, Green, and Yellow Belt Assessment examinations. Material is updated annually, customizable for each organization, and is compatible with Mini-Tab.

Goal was to have customized Lean/ Six Sigma materials that Master Black Belts could teach others and apply quickly without the dedicated use of a large Process Excellence (PE) / Lean Promotion Office (LPO) staff, Instructional Course Designer, or Consultant.

Learn more about Scot Shank and Open Source Six Sigma [web-site]

<http://www.opensourcesixsigma.com/enterprise-licensing-s/82.htm> (\$19,500.00)

Participant textbooks utilized within our development process, in addition to the resources above:

A3 Managing to Learn, John Shook, \$50.00

**Lean Lean Six Sigma Pocket Toolbook, Michael George, \$15.00
The Goal, Eliyahu M. Goldratt, \$15.00**

**Six Sigma Understanding Variation, Donald J. Wheeler, \$40.00
Leading Change, John P. Kotter, \$20.00**

Reference Lean Thinking, (Read first 5 chapters only), Womack and Jones, \$15.00

**Projectz!
LSS
In
Action
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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.freeleansite.com

Coach's Corner

Be Open to New Possibilities Throughout Your Career and Continue Building Personal & Technical Support Networks (You Never Know When you May Need a Reference or an Opportunity of Interest reveals itself ...)

Do Great Work and Toot Your Horn!

Here's a professional reference example from the project I was involved with discussed on the front page:

"Greg [Operations Director] worked with Jay in Sacramento, CA with AAR Composites where Jay was instrumental to the training and implementation of company systems and structures that were set up from a management perspective.

Greg considers Jay a Master of Lean principles and practices and considered Jay a mentor."

Think beyond yourself. Share Your Work with Others and find Venues to leverage your learning efforts.

Find teachable moments. Make things easier. Good ideas beget Good Ideas.

Use subject matter expert (sme) blogs. Also establish Linked-In, Facebook, and Twitter accounts.



**Jay Watson
Stand Out,
Reach Out,
"Shout Out"**



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About Our Approach ...

This lean site provides free project management information, speeches, seminars, newsletters, training materials, articles, data collection forms, audit checklists, and web-based sources for uncovering process waste, reducing non-value adding activity, enhancing safety, improving quality, and increasing productivity.