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## Bend the Curve CIP-News - October, 2008

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners

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## What is the Reality? What is the Truth?



A day is not successful for me unless I thank someone for something or learn something new.

The thanking is easy because I, too, owe so much to so many. However, learning something new is a challenge — not because the world is not filled with mystery but because a day is often focused on the desk (e.g. computer screen) that I forget to look ...up.

Recently, Nancy and I watched John Shook's new LEI Webinar series on A3 thinking. John Shook spent years working for Toyota and was sharing his expertise on one of the fundamental strategies used by Toyota to manage all aspects of their organization, namely A3 thinking.

In his presentation, John noted that when he started working at Toyota one of the first things he was told to do was to go to *Gemba*.

*Gemba* is one of the those first few Japanese words that CI-Ps learn, with the first one being *muda*.

— Walter E. Lowell

My understanding of *Gemba* was that it meant 'the factory, 'the shop floor'. Going to *Gemba* means to go to the workplace, the site of concern and see for yourself.

In his presentation, though, John defined *Gemba* as "What is the Reality?" "What is the Truth?"

This was a new definition for me and one that gave me new insight into the work that we as CI-Ps do.

Think about it.

There is something heroic about seeking the **Truth**, a something epochal in seeking what is **Real**.

I would make the case that our lives are always in pursuit of these two great questions - *even at work* - and you know how difficult it is to answer them.

The world is filled with distractions and noise.

October 2008

Volume 3, Issue 10

### Inside this issue:

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### Special points of interest:

- Next Clinicals
  - November 21
  - December 19
  - January 16
- Miller workshop planning continues..



Cont'd on p.7 —

# Maine Community Colleges Introduce Lean !

— by Merle Davis

On a beautiful fall Friday morning, October 10, 2008, Gail Dyer, Walter Lowell, Nancy Desisto, and Merle Davis traveled to York County Community College to participate in “Lean Day at YCCC”.

Six of the seven Maine community colleges have trained one identified instructor/champion each to participate in a week long Lean training who will offer an introduction to Lean for their area business partners and also a course for interested YCCC students. This session was an opportunity for YCCC to introduce their Lean champion to the community and offer his expertise in Lean to any business that may need an introduction to Lean. YCCC hopes to work with area business to spread the concepts of Lean and, also, to establish and foster connections with area business and the college community as part of their mission of business outreach and partnership building.

YCCC has selected James Appleby to be their Lean instructor. He, along with Paulette Millette, Director of Continuing Education, conducted this session for area business associates as an introduction to Lean and, with a spirited discussion of Lean concepts, a brief simulation. The business associates consisted of both seasoned Lean champions and newcomers to Lean. For example, Baker Company of Sanford, William Arthur of Biddeford, Corning of Kennebunk, Fiber Materials of Biddeford, and Wasco Architectural Lighting of Sanford were in attendance to represent the business community. And us, of course, representing “The State”.

Much to the surprise of the audience, we were able to explain how government does indeed make widgets, that government does have processes and that all of Maine citizens can benefit from government’s involvement in Lean. The audience heard from Walter about how government’s Lean initiative is saving tax dollars and will help make government services more effective and more efficient without elimination of those services.

YCCC is conducting two more of these sessions: Oct. 24, 2008 for members of the Health Care community and November 14, 2008 for the Tourism and Hospitality business communities.



## ***Lean Day at York County Community College***

Be our guest and preview a hands-on simulation of YCCC’s New **Lean for Health Care** Training Program.

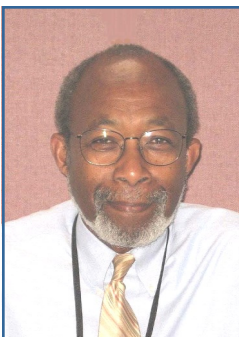
When: Friday October 24, 2008, 9:00AM - 11:00AM

Where: York County Community College  
112 College Dr. Wells, ME

Who Should Attend: Managers / Supervisors

Space is limited! To reserve your seat or for more information call:

Paulette Millette at (207) 646-9282 x205



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# Miller Workshops Planned for Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>

You are the first to know: On December 16, 2008, we are planning to hold the first in a series of one-day Ken Miller visits.

Ken, as you will recall, is the author of the book, *We Don't Make Widgets: Overcoming the Myths That Keep Government from Radically Improving.*

These one-day events will feature Walter and me introducing the workshop attendees to *Lean* concepts and **Ken Miller establishing that “We Do Make Widgets!” in Maine State Government (subtext - when you make widgets you need state-of-the-art tools [*Lean*] to manage).**

The intended audience is Maine State Government's Executives/Managers/Supervisors/Lead-persons/Union. We will offer two independent half-day sessions each day of the series. A work-session will follow each of the workshops. In each work-session, participants will have an opportunity, with facilitation, to solve selected process problems using *Lean tools*. Expected results: each work-session intervention will result in at least a measured 20% process improvement.

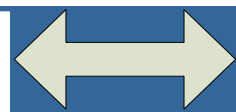
What is different about this attempt to have Ken Miller visit Maine (you may ask)? In a word, this approach is more affordable. The one day-design (versus a multiple-day design) doesn't cost as much. The workshop is shaping to cost between \$135.00 and \$180.00 per person.

We will keep you posted.

\*\*\*\*\* NOTE: Selected CI-P's will be asked to observe/help. \*\*\*\*\*



## The Ins & Outs of CI-Ps



★ Remember when Matt Kruk left MDOL a year ago last July to become a lean supervisor at Fisher Engineering in Rockland? He's back! He'll be starting in the Maine State Legislature's Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability (OPEGA) on Nov. 10th as an Analyst.

# Notes: Clinical Supervision - October 17, 2008

## Welcome

**Present:** Tim Griffin, Jorge Acero, Clough Toppan, Lita Klavins, Merle Davis, John Rioux, Joan Cook, Rae-Ann Brann, Walter Lowell, Eric Dibner, Nancy Desisto, Arthur Davis

Rae-Ann Brann facilitated this Clinical & Eric Dibner took notes. Rae reviewed the agenda & reminded everyone to update their information on the certification matrix & to sign up for roles in future events.

## Updates

**DHHS Update:** ▪ Walter said the OLM office space at 221 State Street is being constructed with hoped for occupancy toward the end of next week. The Lean Laboratory

space downstairs is also being readied for use.

- Walter is working with Maine CDC to charter a VSM re: contracting.
- The DHHS November 19<sup>th</sup> management training, Practicum in Lean Management, filled up quickly – within 24 hours; it includes a 4-hour training, a study mission, an improvement project, and follow-up. They will need CI-PS to lead a breakout session that day and to work with the participants throughout their projects (10-15 interventions).
- There is a study mission at Lonza Rockland October 30 for HETL.
- DHHS also has a grant for system transformation which includes some lean/process improvement.
- Merle is doing a VSM for DHHS re: long-term care next week.
- Nancy talked about the Oregon transformation effort with McKinsey. She and Arthur are part of a multi-state consortium which includes Oregon. For gains, they use the term “FTE liberation.” Ohio also is looking at starting a Lean effort.
- Walter has submitted a 2009 application for our BTC/CI-P process to the Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government Ash Institute’s *Innovations in American Government Awards* program. The rigorous annual award process has five rounds: 1) experts screen applications to select those that will advance & be asked to submit a supplementary 8,000 word application; 2) Fifty (50) will be selected from these & will receive extensive press coverage; 3) Over the winter, finalists are selected; 4) After 2-day site visits, Innovations Awards Finalists are named and receive press coverage; 5) During the late spring, the Finalists make presentations to the Innovations National Selection Committee which then chooses the winners of the award. Each top winner & finalist is eligible to receive \$100,000 and receives monetary grants. The winners are announced in the summer/fall, with ceremony and fanfare. Other Recognition/Award Possibilities: We also discussed the related Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children & Family System Reform, Baldrige award, Shingo government prize, and JD Powers as future ideas.
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s “Common Ground: Transforming Public Health Information Systems” awards were made to 31 public health agencies, including Maine DHHS for its “Grounded in Excellence: To realize immediate improvements to statewide public health preparedness planning and to standardize & disseminate an approach for information system development”. Public Health Informatics Institute (PHII) manages this national program for RWJF, using its business analysis methodology to define core public health processes for automation development.

Walter suggested having Maine’s program present to us. You can also see a sample PHII report ( [http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc/PDF/PHII-Taking\\_Care\\_of\\_Business.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc/PDF/PHII-Taking_Care_of_Business.pdf) ) and description of their business analysis process ( <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc/PDF/PHII-introduction%20to%20business.pdf> ) on the DHHS BTC site.

**MDOL Update:** ▪ Jon Kirsch has taken a job with Lonza Rockland, so Rosemary Presnar will be our liaison from MEP. (See Lonza Study Mission notes: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc/newsletter/2008/july.pdf> )

## Lean Learning: A3

Walter distributed John Shook's "Managing to Learn" materials (preface, chapters 1 and 2). The term "A3" refers to an 11x17 piece of paper. It is a scientific method – a mindset, a problem-solving tool that uses PDCA. It also is a communication tool for management, particularly for mid-level management; it fosters dialog and understanding. Its fundamental is to get to a root cause and develop countermeasures. The large paper size makes the work visible on one sheet and allows you to see obstacles in the process.

The process begins by talking about a problem, then defining what is not working and what you are targeting to achieve. Then, analysis gets at the root causes.

We then viewed & listened to the LEI webinar delivered by John Shook. His key question is, "How do you want to manage?" The complex story (problem) must be told so it fits on one page. In a front-line way, A3 creates organizational learning tools and fosters agreement. Countermeasures are based on facts, but it is important to ask the correct questions. Then it is put through a funnel, asking "Why" to get to the root cause, going to the gemba—where the rubber really hits the road, to check, and to refine analysis & solutions.

A3 materials are available at [www.lean.org/shook](http://www.lean.org/shook).

Discussion: What if people are not "on the same page," do not have familiarity with the tool and language? First, you must do it. It can be used with managers or with peers, who may then see how it works. "It is easier to act your way to a new way of thinking than think your way to a new way of acting."

How will A3 work with *Bend the Curve*? Managers (and staff) do not have the tools at hand. Often people think they know the solution but are fighting alligators and so do not have dialogue about the problem definition and analysis. The challenge is to make the model strong enough that it goes through different levels of the hierarchy, even if it is not adopted by upper management.

Cont'd on next page —

***Common Ground: Transforming Public Health Information Systems*** is a three-year, \$15 million national initiative designed to help state and local public health agencies better respond to health threats by improving their use of information systems. The program's overarching principle is that public health agencies do essentially the same kind of work throughout the country and function in many similar ways. Finding this "common ground" will help agencies share their experiences and best practices, address common approaches to problems, and develop common business processes. Based upon a broader understanding of these processes, the grantees will define the information system needs to support public health.

**Working collaboratively is the key** to developing information system requirements that support a public health agency's work. To that end, in December 2006, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) awarded grants to 31 public health agencies throughout the country. The **Public Health Informatics Institute** (the Institute) serves as the *Common Ground* national program office, guiding grantees in two areas: Informatics Capacity and Requirements Development.



## Notes: Clinical Supervision - October 17, 2008 (cont'd from p.5)

### Open Forum

- The current plan is to bring Ken Miller here the third week of December and, over a 6-9 month period, have a series of 1-day visits with two four-hour sessions/day to introduce managers to the widgets concept. Later sessions will be for CI practitioners. Existing CI-Ps will assist with the program and possible improvement projects.
- DHHS has a system transformation grant that makes some funding available for Lean work: This could include books (will purchase books for, initially, the Management Practicum), speakers (such as Womack, Shook, etc.), and training new CI-Ps.
- Question of how to ensure timely DOP trainings if the number of potential participants at any given time is smaller than what has been required in the past as a minimum. Would smaller groups, say 5-6, be feasible (NB trained 5)? Would a shorter block of time be advisable/feasible?. Arthur pointed out that the week-long, away from regular work format was meant to be transformative. One idea to sell the process is to use actual work problems as part of the DOP training.
- Ideally, continuous improvement should be in every staff person's training and seen as part of their work. And CI-Ps should have their lean BTC work as part of their performance expectations and evaluations.
- York County Community College held an outreach intro to the Lean program. Merle, Nancy, Gail Dyer, and Walter attended collegially. As part of this program, six of the seven community colleges each have one Lean instructor/champion who was given a one-week training in Lean and will teach lean classes, as well as work with businesses.

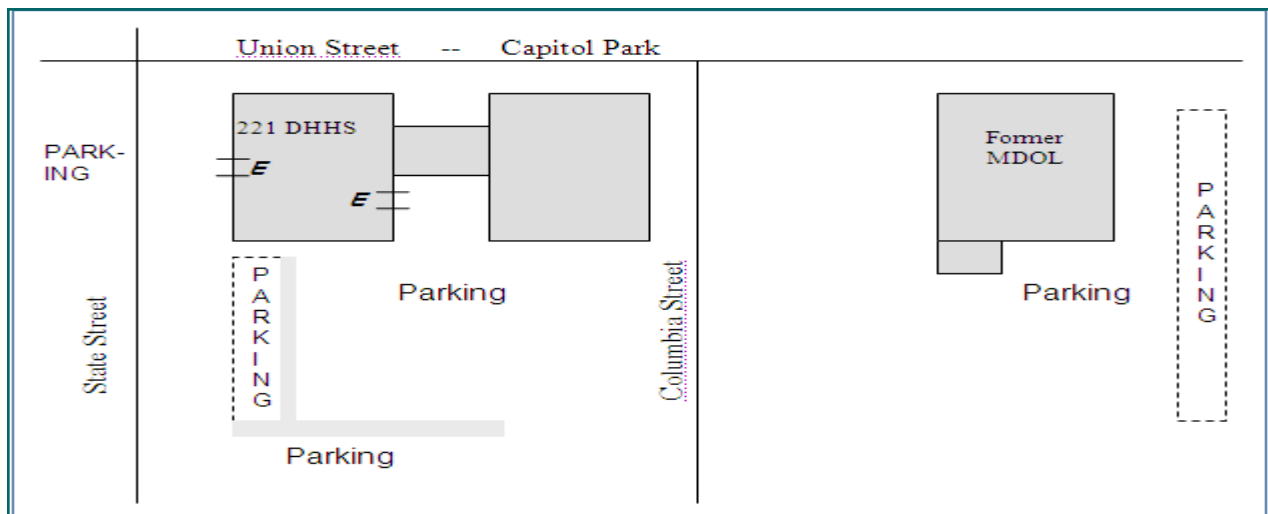
### Lean Lab: A3

The CI-Ps discussed particular ways they could use A3 in their work. The tool is a method of dialogue to get participants engaged. Do we agree on the problem and current conditions? Propose some countermeasures – would they work? Make the process visible to see if people have the same picture. A3 integrates features of all the tools, consulting/contracting, chartering, implementation, value stream mapping, kaizen, etc. We reviewed five A3 examples and how they were presented visually.

Walter distributed a list of four types of A3 – hoshin planning, problem solving, proposal, and current status.

### Adjourn

The next Clinical Supervision is scheduled for November 21<sup>st</sup> at 221 State Street, Lean Laboratory, First Floor.



# What is the Reality? What is the Truth?

(Cont'd. from page 1)

These things creep into all aspects of our lives at home and at work. The world gets faster and more complex making it difficult to discern - What is the **Truth?** and What is the **Reality?**

All of our training in DOP, in Clinical, and in our Certification process is designed to enable us to discern the answers to these two questions in our interventions and work.

Empowering staff who do the work, making work visible, using metrics, identifying waste, going to *Gemba* — to name a few — are techniques to get us as close to the truth of what is going on and the reality of what is happening so that a we can create a future state that is more *Perfect*.

Our practice is designed to enable us to answer these two questions.

Perhaps, when we are asked to describe what we do as CI-Ps, rather than say *Lean*

we should simply say to answer these two questions plus one more: "**What is the Reality?**" and "**What is the Truth?**" (of our current situation)? And "**How can we improve it?**"

That about sums it up for me.

Imperfectly to be sure, but we have seen what success it can bring, and we are in no doubt that with every intervention we get better at answering them. I believe it is that **Truth** that keeps us all going.

Yet, the goal before us is to have an entire organization seek the answer to these questions everyday. A dream, perhaps, if it were not for John Shook's, and many others, testimony on how it can and is being done today.

— *Walter*

## BTC Lean Events

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
Nov 21	8-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 <sup>st</sup> Flr	ASD / WEL
Dec 16	TBD	Ken Miller Workshops	TBA	ASD / WEL
Dec 19	8-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 <sup>st</sup> Flr	ASD / WEL
Jan 16	8-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 <sup>st</sup> Flr	ASD / WEL
Feb 20	8-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 <sup>st</sup> Flr	ASD / WEL

\* To add or see more events or detail, go to the Bend the Curve Calendar in Outlook's Public Folders.





Department of Health  
and Human Services

Maine People Living  
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner

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The primary purpose of the *Bend the Curve* Team is to provide support, consultation, assistance, and leadership in process and other improvement approaches and activities for State staff and work teams as they seek to continually improve their work culture, procedures, processes, and environments – in order to meet the mission of the department and the expectations of Maine citizens.

We're on the net!

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc>

<http://www.maine.gov/labor/bendthecurve/>

**Bend**  
the Curve

## Continuous Improvement Practitioners: BTC Intervention Facilitation Status

## DOP 1-5 to be re-scheduled / Miller session plan for 12/16

The five-day CI-P Bronze first level training (DOP 1-5) has been cancelled because the critical number of participants was not reached. It will be re-scheduled in 2009, with planning & design for smaller groups.

Planning continues for a 12/16/08 Ken Miller set of workshops.

Check the Public Folder BTC calendar & come to the planning meetings.

DHHS		DOL		DAFS	
Kate D. Carnes	L	Jorge A. Acero	O	Rae-Ann Brann	L
Nancy Cronin	O	Michael T. Brooker	IA-O	Wendy Christian	IA-O
Nancy Desisto	L	Deidre A. Coleman	IA-O	Rebecca S. Greene	IA-L
Jane French	L	Joan A. Cook	CL	Lyndon R. Hamm	IA-CL
James Fussell	L	Stephen C. Crate	IA-O	Alicia Kellogg	C-O
Marcel Gagne	IA-O	Arthur S. Davis	L	Billy J. Ladd	CL
Julita Klavins	L	Merle A. Davis	L	Michaela T. Loisel	IA-L
Don Lemieux	C-O	Eric Dibner	O		
Muriel Littlefield	C-L	Peter D. Diplock	O	<b>DOT</b>	
Walter E. Lowell	L	Brenda G. Drummond	IA-O	Michael Burns	C-O
Jack Nicholas*	IA-O	Anita C. Dunham	IA-CL	Jessica Glidden	O
Ann O'Brien	L	Karen D. Fraser	L	Rick Jeselskis	IA-O
Cheryl Ring	C-CL	Timothy J. Griffin	L	Robert McFerren	IA-O
Terry Sandusky	L	Gaetane S. Johnson	IA-O	Sam McKeeman	C-O
Clough Toppan*	CL	James J. McManus	IA-CL	Jeffrey Naum	IA-O
Helen Wieczorek*	IA-O	Scott R. Neumeyer	IA-O		
		Bruce H. Prindall	IA-L	<b>DEP</b>	
OPEGA, Legislature		John L. Rioux	L	Carmel A. Rubin	IA-O
Matthew K. Kruk	IA-O	Sheryl J. Smith	L		
* Community CI-P		IA - Inactive	C - "Champion for Lean" -not facilitating		
L - Lead		CL - Learning Co-Lead		O - Learning Observer	