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Bend the Curve CIP-News - April, 2010

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners

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The Season of Hope and Qualifications

— Walter E. Lowell



Last month we wrote about the coming of Spring here in Maine.

It is a sight to behold to be sure. It comes fast and furious, and it is never predictable.

In addition to sprouting plants, this year, if you look carefully you will see the sprouting of another set of signs that are the harbinger of another season - the Political one.

Over the next several weeks we will witness the start of the creation of a new Maine State Government.

It will take most of this year to unfold to give us a final decision as to what it will look like.

So we here at *CI-P News* feel it is a good time to Hope.

As CI-Ps, we know how important leadership is in driving the changes in government that Bend-the-Curve proposes.

So perhaps this might be a good time to create a Wish List

(i.e. what we would most hope the new Governor and his new administration do for the next four years) from a BTC perspective if you will.

But first we'll make our bias explicit: We don't really care about the next governor's

- Gender,
- Political affiliation, that is Republication, Democrat, Green, or Independent,
- State of birth,
- Country of origin- as long as it is the USA,
- Religion,
- Marital Status,
- Military Service,
- Or Other.

While there will be great debates in the coming months about the worthiness of the above, those of us in the trenches know that these things will make no difference in their success or failure.

That's right, Zip, Zero, no impact.

— continued on p. 4

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Special points of interest:

- Next Clinicals
 - > May 21
 - > June 18
- Lean Summit — Northeast scheduled for August 12-13.





2010 Lean Systems Summit – Northeast

Where Government, Services, and Manufacturing Meet

AN OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUSINESS AND SERVICE LEADERS TO DISCUSS AND LEARN HOW LEAN MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND METHODS ARE BEING USED TO IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

- Take this opportunity for both the public and service sectors to learn from the manufacturing sector.
- Learn how using Lean systems' methods and practices can make your organization more competitive in a global economy.
- Hear speakers from a variety of sectors, and network with Lean Practitioners.
- Attend breakout sessions to learn LEAN best practices and applications.
- Hear highlights from government, businesses, and organizations where Lean methods and practices are successful.
- Share your organization's knowledge and successes.

Participants: Businesses & organizations interested in Lean management and operational principles and methods, including Financial Services, Health Care, Services, Non-Profits, Local & State government, Manufacturing, Construction, etc.

For Information Contact: Walter E. Lowell (207-287-4307) walter.lowell@maine.gov

Summit Date & Time: **Friday, August 13, 2010. 8 AM – 4 PM**
Eastland Park Hotel, Portland, Maine

Pre-Summit Offering: “Lean 101 – Principles of Lean Manufacturing” An introductory experiential workshop presented by Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership.
Thursday, August 12, 2010, 8 AM to 5 PM

BTC Lean Events

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
May 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
June 18	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
July 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Aug 12-13	8:00-4:00	2010 Lean Summit	Portland	WEL
Aug 20	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Sept 17	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Oct 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Nov 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Dec 17	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL
Jan 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State, Lean Lab	ASD / WEL

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

Observations on Observations

— Joan A. Cook

I'm a fan of those wildlife shows – until the lion actually runs down a gazelle and eats it. But I'm fascinated at watching how little baby stoats, foxes, or mountain goats come of age and learn to feed themselves by watching their mothers or fathers do it. How do their unfinished little baby brains grasp the concepts of stalking, capturing, killing and then eating their prey? It's one thing to catch the scent of prey, it's a whole other thing to pull off the killing and eating part.

It points up the importance of learning by observation for us as Practitioners. It's an often underestimated aspect of becoming a better practitioner. If you observe a bronze-level or more seasoned CI-P, you come away impressed with how they manage not only the group dynamic but also the group's actual work. The good facilitator moves a green, unsophisticated and many times *unwilling* group to a satisfying and productive plan for moving forward. They can deftly take a group from a stall to full speed. I wouldn't go so far as to say that an accomplished CI-P is like Tom Sawyer, but a good one can make the work fun and engaging while standing back and letting the participants do the work.

In some of the observations I've conducted as part of my hunt for certification ("hunt" might be overstating the pace – stroll or amble might be more fitting, but that's another story...), I've been impressed at how much I've learned in just the observing.

Believe me, it's not boring. If you aren't asking yourself, "why did he/she decide to do that", you may be asking "why *didn't* he/she do this or that." You

come away with all kinds of notes to self about how you could handle a situation or how to avoid it when you come up against it – and in the process you pick up best practices. (Like your mother showing you how to avoid the snake hole as you trot along beside her). And you come away as spent as if you had been the lead – observing is hard work if you are attentive and thorough.

Of course, another important aspect of observation as a practice is the feedback you are able to give to those you have observed. This role cannot be underestimated either. You are in a position, from your post atop the mound that is your home and refuge, and into which you scamper when danger is close, to point out to mother that if she had just pivoted to the left she would have had the gazelle easily in her claws. Mothers appreciate that sort of feedback if delivered with delicacy. She knows it may help her in the next hunt. It's why we learn to give feedback with appropriate dispassion and in terms the receiver can relate to and understand, with details and specifics.

One gains in so many ways by observation. In the observing, we learn method, technique, what to do and not to do and in the presentation of our observations we learn the same. It's a win-win for all involved. Observing is a good way to ease into the hunt: you're there, but you didn't have to do all the work. And you learned a little better how to do it for yourself.



The Season of Hope & Qualifications

(continued from p. 1)

What we at *CI-P News* suspect will make a difference is the following:

- ✓ They know what they are getting into.
 - Huge deficits.
 - An overwhelming Federal Government.
 - A deteriorating Environment.
 - A demand for more government services.
 - A demand for lower taxes (yes, Georgina, this does conflict with the above-stated item but such is the nature of politics).
- ✓ They listen.
- ✓ They are not afraid of new ideas — in fact, we hope they embrace them.
- ✓ They forget most of what they think they know about government.
- ✓ They show up regularly in the workplace (our gemba)
- ✓ They talk to government employees - on a regular basis.
- ✓ They don't run government like a business.
- ✓ They operate government like a viable enterprise.
- ✓ They know the right size matters.
- ✓ They understand spending a little sometimes saves a lot.
- ✓ They think long-term.
- ✓ They know that building anything of value takes time and persistence.
- ✓ They are not afraid to make a mistake (it happens).

- ✓ They know 'no problem is a problem'.
- ✓ They know they may have the power but not the answer.
- ✓ They know today is all they got but the Sun will rise in the morning.
- ✓ That no one comes to work to do a bad job.
- ✓ All work is a process and all processes can and must be continuously improved.
- ✓ That government is Teamwork.
- ✓ No matter how hard the work gets, no matter how little money is left, a smile, a laugh, a kind word will get more done than can possibly be imagined.

Notice, no "BTC" even mentioned, but I know you all will see it there.

Okay? Not a bad a list, huh?

We left out a lot too, like Brave, Honest, Fair, Truthful, etc. but for us at *CI-P News* those are the fundamentals we simply expect.

So, feel free to send it around or even add to it!

Even if we get half of the above, we will have gotten a good deal.

Oh! One more thing:

They know how to forgive,

- Especially a friend and preferably even an enemy.

— *Walter*

Knowing What to Ask & How to Use the Answers

In Chapter 2 of his latest (concise, useful, and very easy to read) performance management guide for public managers, Jonathan Walters lists and discusses the Big Seven Reasons that people give for why performance management won't work in their environments:

1. *We already did that.*
2. *Performance measures are inherently unfair because I only have so much actual control over outcomes.*
3. *Performance measurement is going to invite unfair comparison.*
4. *Performance management is a great idea but what happens when this administration gets tossed out of office?*
5. *There's no way to measure what I do.*
6. *My agency (or department or division) has conflicting missions.*
7. *I still don't feel like it.*

He adds, "...it has become increasingly clear that the most powerful and pervasive enemy of performance measurement is fear. People in the trenches and in middle management just naturally figure that if higher-ups are going to start quantifying performance, the data will be used first and foremost to beat them black and blue. ...that a poor showing will only add up to public ridicule, punishment, and humiliation."

And, of course, this does happen at times. Especially, as he explains, when the "Why?" and cause & effect questions aren't asked.

Walters quotes Jackie Nytes, Indianapolis City Council member: "...council members seem to be much more comfortable 'trying to micromanage departments because it's easier and takes less time....The fact is, making budget decisions based on information about results is just harder.' "

Jonathan Walters' book applies to all sectors of government (us in BTC, too, & see his sidebar), including the citizens it must respond to, and stresses the need for and effectiveness of governmental transparency.

Source: Measuring Up 2.0 : Governing's New, Improved Guide to Performance Measurement for Geniuses (and Other Public Managers) by Jonathan Walters. Governing Books:Washington DC. 2007

ASKING KEY QUESTIONS

A Legislator's Guide to Using Performance Information

Basic questions to ask agencies in budget and program review hearings:

1. What is your program's (or agency's) primary purpose?
2. What key results are expected from this use of taxpayers' funds?
3. What key performance indicators do you use to track progress in attaining these results?
4. What were the results in the most recent years?
5. How do these results compare to your targets? Have any results been unexpectedly good or unexpectedly poor?
6. How do the results compare to other benchmarks, e.g., other states?
7. For which citizen groups have the results been less than desired? (Examples: Groups by location, gender, income, age, race/ethnicity, disability, etc.)
8. If any targets were missed, why were those targets missed?
9. What is currently being done to improve deficiencies?
10. What actions does your new/proposed budget include that would improve results?
11. How would the results change if funding is increased by 5 percent?
12. Which groups of citizens might benefit? Which might lose? To what extent?
13. What other programs and agencies are partners in producing desired results?

His Source: *Legislating for Results*, Action Brief 9. National Conference of State Legislatures and the Urban Institute, 2003



Department of Health
and Human Services

Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

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The primary purpose of the *Bend the Curve* Team is to provide support, consultation, assistance, and leadership in continuous improvement approaches and activities for State staff, work teams, and leaders as they seek to continually improve their work culture, systems, 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/>



**Continuous Improvement Practitioners:
BTC Intervention Facilitation Status**

DHHS		DOL		DAFS	
Bridget Bagley	O	Jorge A. Acero	O	Rae-Ann Brann	L
Kate D. Carnes	C-L	Michael T. Brooker	IA-O	Wendy Christian	IA-O
Nancy Cronin	O	Deidre A. Coleman	IA-O	Rebecca S. Greene	IA-L
Marcel Gagne	CL	Joan A. Cook	CL	Lyndon R. Hamm	IA-CL
Julita Klavins	L	Stephen C. Crate	O	Alicia Kellogg	C-O
Don Lemieux	C-O	Arthur S. Davis	L	Billy J. Ladd	CL
Muriel Littlefield	C-L	Merle A. Davis	L	Maayan L. Lahti	O
Walter E. Lowell	L	Eric Dibner	O	Michaela T. Loisel	IA-L
Jerrold Melville	O	Peter D. Diplock	O	Henry B. McIntyre	O
Ann O'Brien	L	Brenda G. Drummond	IA-O	Gloria R. Payne	O
Cheryl Ring	C-CL	Anita C. Dunham	IA-CL	DOT	
Anne Rogerson	O	Karen D. Fraser	IA-L	Michael Burns	C-O
Terry Sandusky	L	Timothy J. Griffin	L	Jessica Glidden	IA-O
Bonnie Tracy	O	Gaetane S. Johnson	IA-O	Rick Jeselskis	IA-O
Sec. of State - BMV		Michael J. Johnson	O	Robert McFerren	IA-O
Scott Thompson	O	James J. McManus	IA-CL	Sam McKeeman	C-O
OPEGA, Legislature		Scott R. Neumeyer	IA-O	Jeffrey Naum	IA-O
Matthew K. Kruk	IA-O	Bruce H. Prindall	IA-L	Mark S. Tolman	O
Univ. of Maine		John L. Rioux	L	DEP	
Kim Jenkins	O	Sheryl J. Smith	C-L	Carmel A. Rubin	IA-O
Community – Private Sector					
Nancy Desisto*	IA-L	James Fussell*	IA-L	Jack Nicholas*	IA-O
Jane French*	IA-L	Kelly Grenier*	O	Clough Toppan*	CL
Town of Durham, New Hampshire					
David Kurz	O	Michael Lynch	O		
Steve McCusker	O	Todd Selig	O		
* Community CI-P		IA - Inactive	C - "Champion for Lean" - not facilitating		
L - Lead		CL - Learning Co-Lead		O - Learning Observer	

More Miller workshops & DOP 2-2 being

Additional workshops with Ken Miller are being planned. We'll keep you posted.

The intensive CI-P Bronze level training DOP 2-2 is being planned for this fall. Let us know your suggestions. More info will be forthcoming.

You can also check the BTC Calendar in Outlook's Public Folders & come to the planning meetings for both.