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## Bend the Curve CIP-News - April, 2012

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners

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April 2012

Volume 7, Issue 4

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## Special points of interest:

- Next Clinicals
  - May 18
  - June 15



## For the greatest benefit to all

— Walter E. Lowell



It seems appropriate, given the times we are in and the theme that your editor has been following these past months ("What is the role of government?"),

as well as comments recently made by our executive leadership, that the excerpt below from Thomas Paine's pamphlet, Common Sense, first published anonymously on January 10, 1776, be quoted here.

I would ask our dear readers to note the last line of the paragraph where it seems, no less, that at least one of America's Founding Fathers was interested in government that was, as we Continuous Improvement

Practitioners (CI-Ps) would say in modern terms, better, faster and cheaper.

CI-Ps do indeed stand in august company.

Paine's ideas helped launch the American Revolution. A revolution in how people are governed that arguably continues to this day.

"Without the pen of the author of 'Common Sense,' the sword of Washington would have been raised in vain." noted John Adams.

Who among us would not add to our desire for a Lean government an outcome that includes "*a government of the least expense and greatest benefit*"? — *cont'd on p. 3*

*Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government, which we might expect in a country without government, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like a dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish the means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.*

# *Project Management*

Notes from Tom Mochal's *TenStep* Project Management class:

**Project Management:** Projects are temporary efforts. Way to organize the work, including all close-out functions.

**Product Management:** Tangible products. Have own life cycles, which are longer than the project life cycle. Many confuse these two so that ongoing product management is often seen as never-ending project management.

\*\*\* It is easier to succeed if one breaks up a large project into small ones. However, you still have to be mindful of project dependencies and the “big picture” coordination and integration of the related projects.

— Lita

*The significant problems we face cannot be solved with the same thinking that created them.*

— Albert Einstein

(many attributions to him, but no specific source)

Thomas Paine sought to free Mankind from the tyranny of oppressive government. Few in his day could conceive of a government that did not include a king — a revolutionary idea that would take the creative energies of our Founding Fathers.

**Wikipedia** defines revolution (from the Latin *revolutio*, "a turn around") as a fundamental change in power or organizational structures.

Given this perspective, applying the principles of Lean thinking to our work here in government is no less a revolution and is, no doubt, one reason why it is so difficult for our colleagues and co-workers to understand Lean Thinking.

It was not surprising then that at a recent Shingo Prize conference several speakers talked about 'the revolution' that was going on in the workplace.

The revolution they were talking about begins, as with all revolutions, as a revolution in thought — what we know as Lean Thinking.

Two ideas are fundamental to this way of thinking; respect for people and continuous improvement.

*Bend the Curve* is focused on the application of these ideas to government.

Government is not a material thing out there to be poked and kicked, but a living breathing system created, moment to moment, by those who work in and for it. This for CI-Ps includes not only you and me but also our colleagues, co-workers, supervisors, managers and executives.

Our success in creating a government that is the "*least expense and greatest benefit, preferable to all others*" is dependent, in part, on the Light of our combined vision.

This vision is our inherited culture bequeathed by the many who have gone before us, including those of the stature of Thomas Paine as well as those that at one time filled the desk -or cubicles- we now inhabit.

All contribute, no matter how great or small. We are blessed by those whose Lights are so bright that they can see a better future and, equally, diminished when those lights are missing.

Government is a living breathing system made up of individuals contributing their energies to create a society that is with "*least expense and greatest benefit*" to all. But this does not come with a playbook, nor can it be created by a wish.

The question is always *How?* By what Method do we achieve this outcome?

The nice thing about working for State government is that there is always so much to learn.

Every single day.

If you miss something important, there is always the local newspaper or the internet.

As I write, government is abuzz with a comment from Governor LePage regarding middle managers being corrupt. This comment was followed up with an emailed letter to clarifying what he meant. It is copied on p.6 in full for those that missed it.

— cont'd on p. 4

## *For the greatest benefit to all* (cont'd. from p.3)

The governor is exhorting middle managers - and really all us - to change the status quo and create a culture from one that says "no" to one that says "can do", which we here at *Bend the Curve* have been advocating for long and hard. He goes on to talk about roadblocks to communication and "employees want[ing] to keep doing the same thing because that was the way it always was done", noting that employees have been corrupted by the bureaucracy.

No surprise here either and, again, we here at *CI-P News* whole-heartily agree, for bureaucracy is the bane of government and eventually leads to the tyranny that Thomas Pane railed against.

The Governor ends by saying:

*If you are working hard for the people of Maine and following the leadership of your Commissioners, then keep up the good work — you know who you are. If you are dragging your feet because you do not like the direction the Administration is headed, then it is time to either get on board or get out of the way. State employees need to work together and follow the leadership of the Administration — that is your job and it is the right thing to do. We are all one team and we share one goal: make Maine better. Let's keep working for it.*

Ed Deming once talked about the Cargo Cult that arose in the South Pacific after the war. When the war ended, the military bases closed and the flow of goods and materials ceased. The natives in observing the 'riches' brought in by the military attempted to attract further deliveries of goods by engaging in ritualistic practices

such as building crude imitation landing strips, aircraft and radios made of coconuts and straw, and mimicking the behavior that they had observed of the military personnel operating them, in hopes as if by magic the goods would appear.

Deming argued: "How would they know any different. They didn't know how to learn in the face of anomaly, the hall mark of scientific culture".

Deming continued: "How **would** they know? How **could** they know? The answer is frightening; there's no **chance** to know; without knowing **what to do**, we can be ruined by best efforts!"

These are the questions left unanswered by the Governor's missive.

The Cargo Cults were following what their leaders said. They thought it was the right thing to do, and they worked hard at it but could not produce the results their leaders thought possible, despite the exhortations to do more.

Deming noted that leaders need to provide not only the correct vision but also the correct methods and tools without which all sought-for improvements are left wanting. Best efforts alone, as Deming so often remarked, won't do it.

Management controls the processes and operations of government.

Management's job is to optimize the system of work which includes employees, suppliers and customers on a win-win basis. It is also to drive out fear — not create it.

— *cont'd on next page*



BTC has knocked and even pounded on many government doors in order to make government leadership aware of the value and power of the revolution in thought and practice called "Lean" that is taking place in workplaces around the world.

None have opened.

Even those from other states and eminent universities have acknowledged and/or emulated our efforts here.

Sadly, our government has remained silent and ironically, as witnessed by the Governor's letter of frustration, continues to ignore *that which he is seeking*.

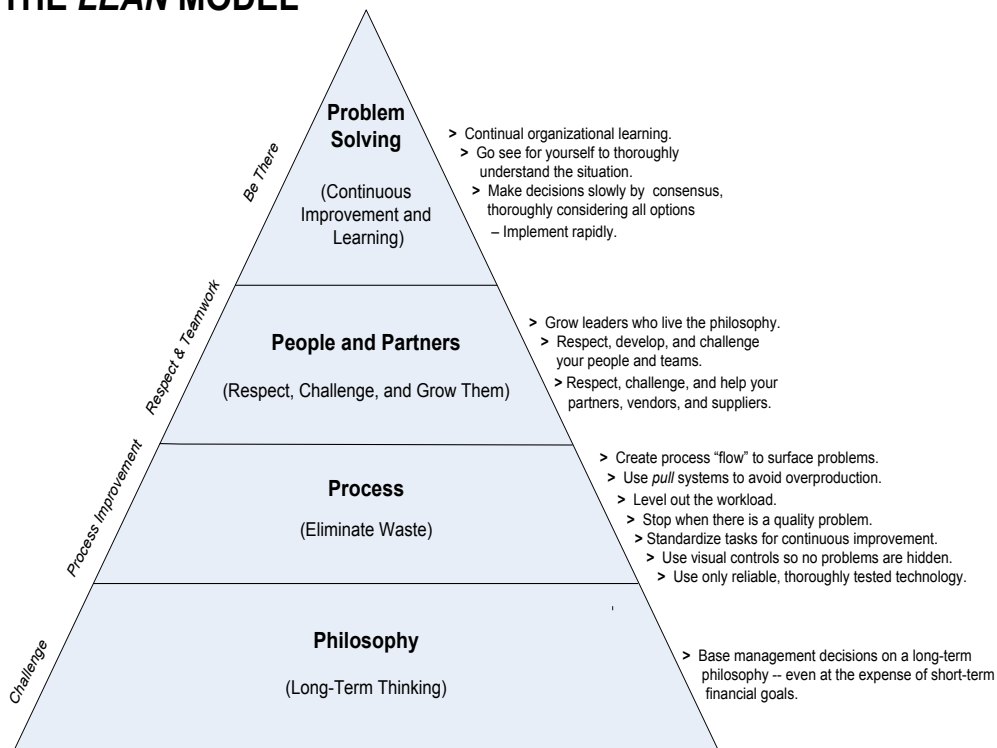
A final note of inspiration to all taken from Thomas Paine's American Crisis and,

while a little tangential, seems relevant to our cause as well:

*These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated.*

— Walter

## THE LEAN MODEL



Model the Way - Inspire a Shared Vision - Challenge the Process - Enable Others to Act - Encourage the Heart

## Definition: Bureaucracy

System of administration distinguished by its (1) clear hierarchy of authority, (2) rigid division of labor, (3) written and inflexible rules, regulations, and procedures, and (4) impersonal relationships. Once instituted, bureaucracies are difficult to dislodge or change.

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/bureaucracy.html>

★ ★ ★



Paul R. LePage  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

April 27, 2012

Employees of the State of Maine

Dear State Employees,

Many of you have heard reports from last night's town hall meeting in Newport. I wanted to write to ensure that the full meaning of my remarks were clear.

When my Administration came into office, we promised Maine people we would not settle for the status quo. The culture of state government needed to change from "no" to "can do!" Many of you have taken this to heart and are doing great things for the people of Maine. Make no mistake, I hear every day how much more customer friendly the State has become.

However, for whatever reason, some employees have not come on board. Roadblocks have been put up, hurdles have been thrown in the way, and information has not been passed up to senior management. Those employees want to keep doing the same thing because it was always done that way. Quite frankly, that attitude is unacceptable. In my opinion, it shows that they have been corrupted by the bureaucracy.

When the union bosses tell employees they should not participate in the Administration's initiatives and instead just "ride it out," we are dealing with a lack of integrity. In other words, we are dealing with corruption.

If you are working hard for the people of Maine and following the leadership of your Commissioners, then keep up the good work - you know who you are. If you are dragging your feet because you do not like the direction the Administration is headed, then it is time to either get on board or get out of the way. State employees need to work together and follow the leadership of the Administration - that is your job and it is the right thing to do. We are all one team and we share one goal: make Maine better. Let's keep working for it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage  
Governor



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# Lean TIPS



## ➤ Do you know the difference between quality assurance and quality control?

- **Quality assurance** is a planned and systematic set of preventive activities to assure product quality, focused on processes.
- **Quality control** is the detection of quality (or defects) once the product is manufactured.

In other words, quality assurance (QA) defines the standards that need to be followed to meet customer expectations. Quality control (QC) ensures that these defined standards are followed at every step, usually through random checks. The results of these random checks inform QA, which can then take any needed corrective actions to assure the guarantee of quality.

So, QA tries to assure that the product will always be a quality product. QC checks to make sure that unforeseen circumstances have not interfered with this goal and that a problem-free product or service is delivered to the customer.

## BTC Lean Schedule

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
May 18	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
June 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
July 20	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Aug 9-10	8:00-5:00	2012 Lean Systems Summit	Portland, Holiday Inn on the Bay	WEL/JK
Aug 17	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Sept 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Oct 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Nov 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Dec 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Jan 18	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Ave., Pine Tree Rm.	WEL/JK/JR/MD

\* 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

Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

**Office of Lean Management Services  
Maine DHHS  
2 Anthony Avenue  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011**

**FAX: 207-287-9351  
TTY: 1-800-606-0215  
Lean Learning Lab: 207-**

**OLMS/BTC Staff:**

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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 Maine State government and the expectations of Maine citizens.

**We're on the net !**

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

**Bend  
the Curve**

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

DHHS		DOL		DAFS	
Kate D. Carnes	C	Joan A. Cook	I-LL	Dennis Corliss	O
Nancy Cronin	C-O	Merle A. Davis	L	Sam McKeeman	C-O
Theresa Dube	O	Eric Dibner	LCL		
Marcel Gagne	LCL	Timothy J. Griffin	L		
Julita Klavins	L	John L. Rioux	L		
Walter E. Lowell	L	Sheryl J. Smith	C-O		
Jerrold Melville	LCL			<b>Sec. of State-BMV</b>	
Kristopher Michaud	O			Scott Thompson	O
Ann O'Brien	L	<b>Univ. of Maine</b>			
Douglas Patrick	O	Kim Jenkins	O	<b>DOT</b>	
Terry Sandusky	L	Brynn Riley	O	Michael Burns	C-O
Bonnie Tracy	C-O	Ghassan Saleh	O		
				<b>OPEGA, Legislature</b>	
		<b>DEP</b>		Matthew K. Kruk	I-O
		Carmel A. Rubin	I-O		
<b>Community – Private Sector *</b>					
Rae-Ann Brann*	L	James Fussell*	I-LCL	Anne Rogerson*	I-LCL
Arthur S. Davis*	I-L	Kelly Grenier*	LL	Clough Toppan*	I-LCL
Ericka Deering*	O	Ted LaCrone*	O		
Nancy Desisto*	C-L	Henry B. McIntyre*	I-LCL		
<b>Town of Durham, NH</b>					
		David Kurz	C-O	Steve McCusker	C-O
		Michael Lynch	C-O	Todd Selig	C-O
<b>* Community CI-P</b>					
I - Inactive		C - "Champion for Lean" - not facilitating			
L - Lead (LL-Learning)		LCL - Learning Co-Lead		O - Learning Observer	

# BTC Calendar

*You can check the  
Bend the Curve  
Calendar in the  
State of Maine's  
Outlook Public  
Folders for contin-  
uous improvement  
meetings,  
Clinicals, trainings,  
and other events.*