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Bend the Curve CIP-News - September, 2012

Bend the Curve Continuous Improvement Practitioners

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Special points of interest:

- Next Clinicals
  - September 21
  - October 19
- Check out the Photos !

A Cup of Tea

— Sam McKeeman, DAFS

One Zen-Koan that has several variations reminds us about Lean success regardless of whether you are facilitating or participating. It has to do with how we approach the acquisition of new knowledge.

As the story goes, a learned and well-known professor approached a Zen master. His purported purpose was to learn in more detail about the nuances of Zen. As the discussion unfurled, the esteemed professor was doing more and more of the talking, eventually giving a mini-lecture to the master on an interpretation of a particular point of view. At this time, the Zen master offered the professor some tea. The master began to pour the tea into the cup but continued pouring until the cup overflowed, spilling the excess into the saucer. The professor, dumbfounded, shouted to the master to stop as the cup was clearly full. The Zen master then stated that the professor was like the cup, full to overflowing with his own thoughts and ideas. He was not able to take in new information or ideas. Indeed, the Zen master suggested that the professor return later like an empty cup, able to take in new knowledge.

I know that I have to remind myself to approach a facilitation or process improvement session with an open mind. We all have opinions, beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes that precede the event. We must listen to what is being said about the issue, regardless of our view that what is being said is incorrect or part of an ideological narrative.

We have all witnessed a session participant who acts and talks with disdain toward others or their beliefs. As a facilitator, we must intervene and protect the space. As a participant, we are also obliged to intervene, especially if the facilitator abdicates. Another participant might assume the "know-it-all" role, telling others "that is not what the policy says". We must probe, perhaps taking a Socratic approach to having the truth revealed versus just stating it in such a way that leads to an unproductive argument.

Appearing to have an empty cup requires one to ask open-ended questions and dig deep (e.g. five why's, root cause analysis probing) rather than making corrective statements. The goal is the same - get the full understanding of the process or issue into play—but the stylistic difference can lead to more participants feeling respected. A safe and inclusive climate has been established since the facilitator and participants (sometimes guided by the facilitator) appear as empty cups to each other. Everyone is ready to learn.

*Koan: n. A puzzling, often paradoxical statement or story, used in Zen Buddhism as an aid to meditation and a means of gaining spiritual awakening. It means a "public case" for its wisdom has so often been told that it has become "public." The historical meaning of the Japanese word "koan" is roughly "the place where the truth is declared."

A Cup of Tea (cont'd from p.1)

The facilitator assures that people unready to learn do not appear and shut down the learning environment.

Finally, there are the four states of knowing.

At some point in all lives, we "don't know what we don't know" about a given topic. When we are two years old, we don't know that we can't tie our shoes.

The next stage is where we "know what we don't know" - I can't tie my shoes.

The third stage is that we "know what we know". Here, we are consciously aware of knowing about this new thing. We can do it, explain it, and use the new knowledge, but always in the conscious realm.

The fourth state is described as I "don't know what I know". That is, the knowledge has been so subsumed into who you are that it appears to be known by everyone. It appears universal, routine, in the realm of commonplace knowledge.

Think of the college physics professor teaching first year undergraduates, talking way over their heads. The professor does not know that he and only other highly educated physicists know what a Higgs Field* is. How many State managers casually tell a new employee to "just do X or Y" and leave them bewildered? The manager has forgotten that he/she has done this a thousand times over the last decade. It has become so routine to the manager (like shoe tying) that the manager does it sub-consciously, on automatic pilot. We occasionally need to be reminded that people in the fourth state must be consciously aware that many participants in a given session are in state two or three. Therefore patience, understanding, and a non-judgmental attitude must prevail. The facilitator must preserve the integrity of the session so those with an empty cup can seek knowledge and receive it with grace from those in state four.

— Sam

The Higgs Field is a possibly-discovered invisible field of energy that exists throughout the entire universe. The field is accompanied by a fundamental particle called the Higgs Boson, which it uses to continuously interact with other particles. As particles pass through the field they are endowed with the property of mass, much like how an object could pass through treacle (or molasses) and become heavier, and consequently, slower. Although apparent, mass is not generated by the Higgs field, as creation of matter or energy would conflict with the laws of conservation; it is, however, transferred to particles from the field, which contains the relative mass in the form of energy. Once the field has endowed a formerly massless particle it slows down because it has become heavier, therefore giving other particles the chance to latch onto it using the electromagnetic force. If the Higgs field did not exist, no particles would have the required mass to attract one another and simply float around freely at light-speed. http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Higgs_field

Making Decisions

Suppose you were on *Make a Deal*. How would you choose a door?

The Monty Hall Problem
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhlc7peGlGg&feature=related

Testing The Monty Hall Problem
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_djTy3G0pg&feature=related

What do you think:

➢ Does this counter-intuitive idea apply to how we work with improvement teams? How or how not?
➢ Does this "problem" have anything to do with the tea cup story? Of emptying our minds, letting go of our assumptions?

Is it about learning to make decisions in a different way? And, as Continuous Improvement Practitioners understanding and helping others to understand and apply Decision Analysis and modeling?

Intro to Decision Analysis
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilr_gUeXH1s&feature=related

The Tea Cup & The Empty Mind

There are many versions of — and sources for — the tea cup koan:

Nan-in was a popular Buddhist monk, Japanese master, during the Meiji era (1868-1912). A scholar approached Nan-in to learn more about Zen. As a courtesy, Nan-in offered tea to the scholar. The scholar held the tea cup in his hand, and Nan-in poured the tea. The monk continued didn't stop pouring tea into the cup even after the cup was full. The tea, of course, spilled out.

The scholar cried, "Stop, my cup is full."

Nan-in stopped pouring and said, "Your mind is like your tea cup. It is full. How can it take new ideas from me?"

And from http://bengtwendel.com/your-teacup-is-full-empty-your-cup/

". . . the tea story . . . is a great reminder that in order to learn we have to be humble, to empty our mind and make room for the new."

"Once, a long time ago, there was a wise Zen master. People from far and near would seek his counsel and ask for his wisdom. Many would come and ask him to teach them, enlighten them in the way of Zen. He seldom turned any away.

One day an important man, a man used to command and obedience came to visit the master. 'I have come today to ask you to teach me about Zen. Open my mind to enlightenment.' The tone of the important man's voice was one used to getting his own way.

The Zen master smiled and said that they should discuss the matter over a cup of tea. When the tea was served the master poured his visitor a cup. He poured and he poured and the tea rose to the rim and began to spill over the table and finally onto the robes of the wealthy man. Finally the visitor shouted, 'Enough. You are spilling the tea all over. Can't you see the cup is full?'

The master stopped pouring and smiled at his guest. 'You are like this tea cup, so full that nothing more can be added. Come back to me when the cup is empty. Come back to me with an empty mind.'

Here is another version:

Nan-in, a Japanese master during the Meiji era, received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen.

Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup full, and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he no longer could restrain himself. "It is overfull. No more will go in!"

Like this cup, Nan-in said, you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"

Related quotes:

- ◆"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's there are few. – Shunryu Suzuki-roshi
- ◆The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn – Alvin Toffler
- ◆When any real progress is made, we unlearn and learn anew what we thought we knew before. – Henry David Thoreau
- ◆ Knowledge is learning something every day. Wisdom is letting something go every day. – Zen Proverb"

Governing Webinar-Social Services: Breaking Through the Gridlock

Russell Barron
Administrator
Division of Welfare
Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

This webinar presented how Idaho state government's Division of Welfare has been addressing the challenges of doing more with less, systems and culture change, and identifying fraud, abuse, and waste (within IT systems, across programs, over time).

As he discussed what they are doing, their application of continuous improvement concepts became evident throughout (see slides on right).

From a program integrity perspective, he asked -

- Is it [fraud] real?
- What are the perceptions about it?
- Where does it occur?
- Why does it occur? [Get to the true root cause.]
- What can we do about it? (Interventions)

And, he said, because we do not know what we do not know, they have used entity analytics in this process, increasing the effectiveness and the efficiency of case workers, reducing fraud, waste, and abuse, and — as a result — offering a more positive citizen experience.

So, how can we know what we don't know? While much of this webinar focused, from a program integrity perspective on identifying and defining fraud, it really was about changing to an organizational problem-solving culture and continuous improvement mindset and identifying the who, what, where, when, and why of any problem or concern.

New Interventions

- **Customer focused approach:** Change the business process to focus on the customer's experience and needs
- **Automate critical business components:** Invest in automated system and processes when opportunities are known
- **Change the culture:** Make changes to the culture -- real change comes when people think differently about the work they do
- **Operational consistency:** Create operational consistency statewide with standards and documentation at a process level
- **Define the work:** Casework is not a mystery, its actionable tasks
- **Solve Problems:** Discuss "Problems First" to resolve impediments and move to universally known performance targets
- **New analytics:** Develop tools and methods to analyze business processes, customer interactions and churn, and program integrity
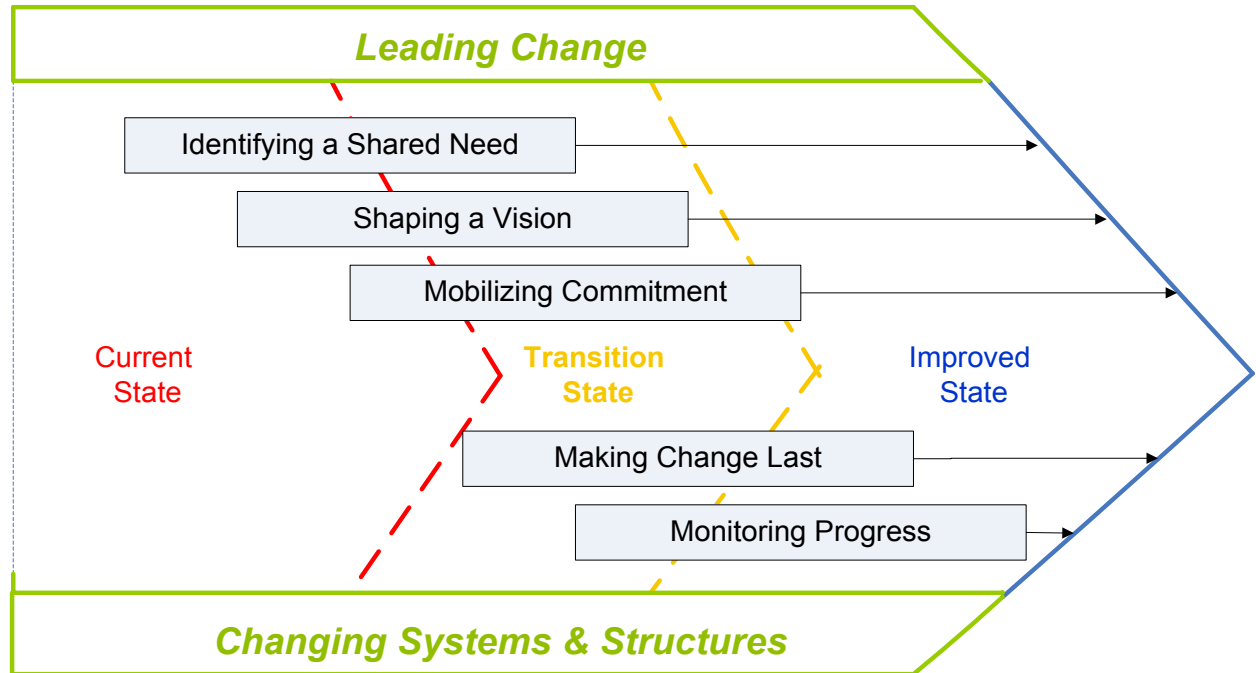
New Interventions

Typical Path	Idaho Business Focus
Spend a lot of time finding the perfect "shiny object" that will solve a problem…this is generally a technology-based solution	Based on the core mission, continuously define the problems…solutions are generally process-based with policy and technology support
Use a contractor to create/assemble the solution (often technology-based) and give the contractor responsibility to make that solution work	Business leadership is responsible for the solution which often requires a mix of process, policy, and technology (often with contractor help) to make the solution work
Start by identifying all the requirements; don't start until ALL the requirements are defined	Begin immediately when you know enough to create something that is needed; even before ALL requirements are known
The contractor identifies next steps based on requirements from subject matter experts; the design comes from the requirements	Business Leadership identifies the next actionable step to solve the most critical business problem; the design comes from a business-driven analysis
"Gate Reviews" are conducted to monitor progress when scheduled or when something is completed according to the project plan	"Return on Investment Reviews" are conducted to monitor if effort and progress provide value; if value is not found, effort is redirected
Project and Operations Maintenance are two separate groups; each have different and competing interests, schedules, and priorities	Everyone is a part of the project; Project and Operations work is integrated to define, create, test, and deploy functionality
Success is defined by completion of the Project plan's task list	Success is defined by operational outcomes – "I can do better work, I can do more work"

IDAHO
Department of Health and Welfare   The Idaho Experience

How can we do this? Jeff Huth, IBM Program Director, described the how of identifying complex, distant, possible duplicates, relationships, and commonalities, coordinating/linking with other programs in-state and with other states. Event Analytics, he said, searches for patterns and connections and uses fuzzy logic.

http://event.on24.com/eventRegistration/EventLobbyServlet?target=lobby.jsp&eventid=512242&sessionid=1&key=0DADA0F2D537AD5B936343CA50BAFF23&eventuserid=68869572

Change Acceleration Process
CAP Model

Leading Change

Identifying a Shared Need

Shaping a Vision

Mobilizing Commitment

Current State | Transition State | Improved State

Making Change Last

Monitoring Progress

Changing Systems & Structures

* *Adapted from Joint Commission*

BTC Lean Schedule

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
Sept 21	8:15-1:00	Study Mission-MaineGeneral Thayer	Waterville—Thayer Campus	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Oct 19	7:30-5:00	Study Mission-New Hampshire Public Safety	New Hampshire	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Nov 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Dec 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Jan 18	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
Feb 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
March 15	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
April 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
May 17	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD
June 21	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	2 Anthony Avenue	WEL/JK/JR/MD

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

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.

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We're on the net !

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

Bend the Curve

BTC Calendar

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

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		
Jerrold Melville	LCL	Sheryl J. Smith	C-O		
Kristopher Michaud	O			**Sec.of State-BMV**	
Ann O'Brien	L			Scott Thompson	O
Terry Sandusky*	L	**Univ. of Maine**			
Bonnie Tracy	C-O	Kim Jenkins	O	**DOT**	
		Brynn Riley	O	Michael Burns	C-O
		Ghassan Saleh	O		
				OPEGA, Legislature	
				Matthew K. Kruk	I-O
Community — Private Sector					
Rae-Ann Brann	L	James Fussell	I-LCL	Henry B. McIntyre	C-LCL
Arthur S. Davis	C-L	Kelly Grenier	I-LL	Douglas Patrick	O
Ericka Deering	O	Ted LaCrone	O	Anne Rogerson	C-LCL
Nancy Desisto*	C-L	Walter E. Lowell*	L	Clough Toppan	C-LCL
		Town of Durham, NH			
		David Kurz	C-O	Steve McCusker	C-O
		Michael Lynch	C-O	Todd Selig	C-O
* Certified-Bronze CI-P		I - Inactive		C – "Champion for Lean" - not facilitating	
L - Lead (LL-Learning)		LCL – Learning Co-Lead		O – Learning Observer	