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Managing VUCA Is Easier than You Think

Karen Martin, President, TKMG, Inc.

(This article previously ran on Forbes.com in April 2019)

Monster weather events. Unstable supply chains. Geopolitical turmoil. It's not difficult to build the case that we're living in a **volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous** world.

These four words make up the oft-spoken acronym, VUCA, introduced by the U.S. Army War College in the 1990s to describe the new, constantly changing and extreme conditions it faced in Afghanistan and Iraq. From those origins the term has leapfrogged into corporate boardrooms and strategic planning meetings. Business schools now offer VUCA leadership certificates. Management consultants publish reports on how VUCA is changing business. Leadership conferences include VUCA-themed sessions. All this activity is grounded in the idea that organizations today face more volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity than ever before, and these conditions require a different leadership approach.

But is the idea even correct in today's business environment?

There is little evidence to suggest that leaders today deal with more volatility, uncertainty, or complexity than their predecessors. In fact, you may deal with less. Research on economics and business trends over the last few decades shows that the stock market is less volatile than in the past, there is less competition in many industries, and Americans are far less likely to move for a new economic opportunity.

But the day-to-day experience of leaders feels more volatile, uncertain, and complex because of the one element there is more of: ambiguity.

Ambiguity has become the corporate default state, a condition leaders and organizations sink into because it's automatic—it's easier to assume you know or to operate

with a bias than it is to ask questions that may force a peer or team member to rethink what they're doing or why they're doing it. But the costs of operating with ambiguity are enormous. Ambiguity in the form of a vague job posting leads to an underperforming hire. Ambiguity about the purpose of a project results in wasted time and money. Ambiguity about a customer requirement leads to unnecessary features that bring no benefit because the so-called "requirement" wasn't one.

And unlike volatility, uncertainty, and complexity—all genuine realities that are mainly outside of your control—ambiguity is man-made. People create ambiguity.

Fortunately, they can also abolish it with **clarity**.

When leaders establish clarity about foundational elements such as the organization's purpose, its priorities, its processes, its performance, and its approach to problem solving, the world around them becomes less volatile, uncertain, and complex. Leaders can set the organization's sights higher and accomplish more without feeling like they are held hostage by conditions over which they have no control.

For example, while volatility is a reality of business, it's far more predictable than most leaders believe. The causes of seasonal fluctuations, supply chain disruptions, natural disasters, or shifts in demand are often out of your control and can lead to major month-to-month revenue or cost disruptions. But it's possible to see and heed early warning signs. Leaders who seek clarity about internal and external conditions and track those with high potential to create disruption are better able to recognize volatile conditions and respond accordingly. Leaders that instead assume volatility is both unpredictable and unknowable have that belief fulfilled every time they're blindsided.

We saw the latter with an energy client of ours that lacked clarity about the issues driving demand and missed the signs that customers wanted sustainable energy options. Changes in the technology driving sustainable energy generation coupled with moves by competitors allowed the company to catch on and eventually they caught up—but it required more investment and put more stress on the organization than would have been necessary had it seen and heeded the signs.

Uncertainty, like volatility, is also a reality of business and life, but that doesn't mean leaders can't mitigate it. Many uncertainties can be clarified and planned for. Instead of being a passive bystander, leaders can invest resources to collect and analyze competitive intelligence. Instead of hoping that a controversial legislation won't pass, get informed and prepared about the necessary steps to become compliant. Looking ahead is a vital survival skill that can greatly clarify the necessary path forward and avert sudden surprise.

Complexity, for its part, can often be about the lens you take to your business, since most complex situations and concepts can be broken down, clarified, and addressed. For example, Ford removed complexity when it decided to stop producing sedans and instead focus on trucks, minivans, and SUVs. A client of ours recently took a similar step to decrease complexity when it insourced part of its production process from a third-party with which it had a complex relationship.

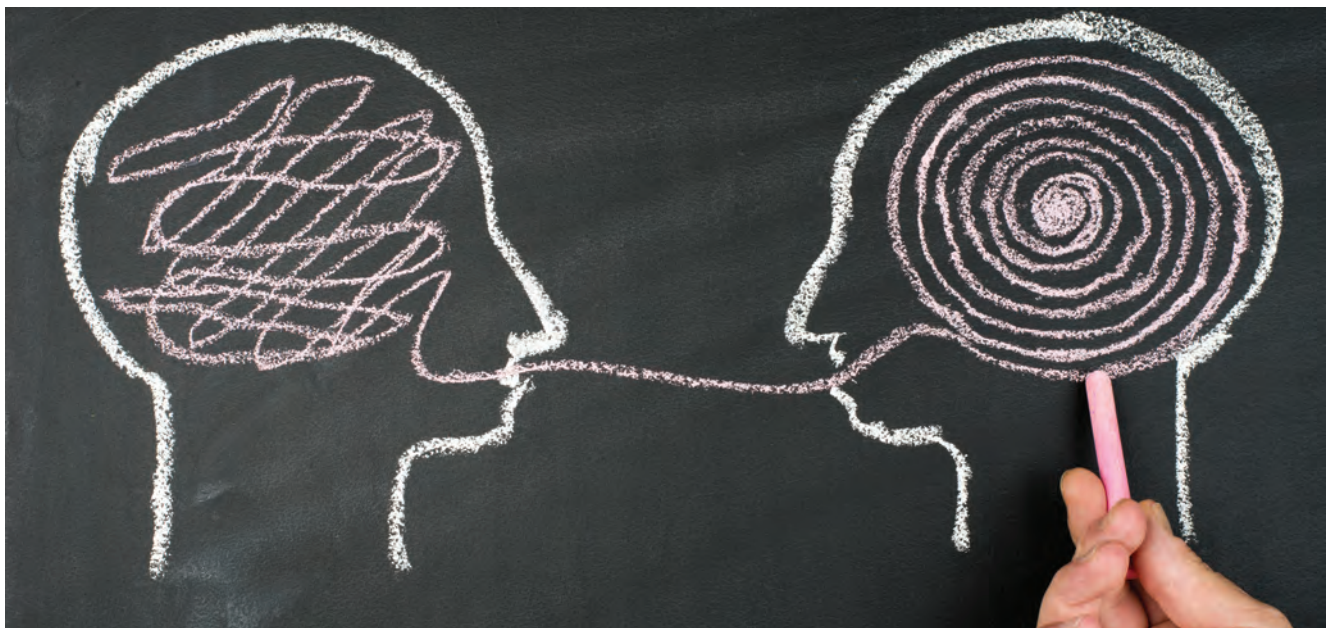
Our world today may be fast-paced, but clarity is the antidote to VUCA. Clarity about purpose, priorities, process, performance, and problems to be solved enables higher productivity, better decision making, more effective and timely problem solving, more relevant action, and better relationships—all of which lead to higher levels of performance for both the individual and the organization. It thrills customers, increases profits, and lowers costs. Clarity also makes the people within an organization happier and more engaged with their work.

In short, clarity is the key to outstanding performance—and an effective way to mitigate the feeling of living in a VUCA world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen Martin, president of the global consulting firm TKMG, Inc., is a leading authority on Lean management and business performance improvement. Her clients have included Fortune 500 companies in nearly every industry and government agencies at local, state, and federal levels. Her book, *Clarity First: How Smart Leaders and Organizations Achieve Outstanding Performance*, was recently released by McGraw-Hill. For more information, please visit www.tkmg.com.

Clarity is the key to addressing complexity. Photo credit: iStock.com/marrio31



Reflections of Toyota

Mike Hoseus, Executive Director, Center for Quality People & Organizations

(Originally posted on LinkedIn October 2019)



People often ask me what the main lessons were from my 13 years as a leader at Toyota.

I often tell the story of coming from Toys R Us with no background in automobile manufacturing. My wife nearly had to force me to put in an application to work at the newly built Toyota Kentucky facility. When I was hired, it did not take me long to realize that I was in the right system to build skill, learn from others, and reach higher levels of individual, team, and organizational capability.

The Toyota environment is special to me because it harnessed my capability to learn and my desire to interact with people. Those first years following 1989 when the Georgetown plant opened are many of my favorite professional memories of the level of camaraderie and teamwork.

The tenets of Lean thinking—continuous improvement and respect for people—are really what was harnessed to take a team of people in a similar position to me (with little to no experience in an automobile manufacturing environment) and to successfully launch a new plant in a foreign country. Toyota understood the challenges at hand and they took the necessary long-term, multi-generational approach to build a sustainable environment that continues to reach new heights. Fujio Cho, former president of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky, frequently reminded us as leaders to go and see, ask why, and show respect.

I often look back at the experiences with my Japanese mentors as influential beyond the walls of Toyota Kentucky and applicable to life and leadership in all contexts. Continuous improvement was enacted through the everyday challenge to drive results, make problems visible, harness creative potential, and work for others. Respect for people was evident through the focus on building teams and forcing cross-functional engagement. It is also evident in the community outreach and the real-

ization of the potential of the next generation. I've been very grateful to have worked closely with the school districts surrounding the Toyota environment and to see how much emphasis is placed on building problem-solving and collaboration in the next generation.

Now I am in a position to share this knowledge with others. For the last 12 years since co-authoring *Toyota Culture* with Jeffrey Like, I have been fortunate to share the message of continuous improvement and respect for people with individuals and organizations around the globe. It brings me great satisfaction to see the level of initiative and deep responsibility that company leaders feel when they take on the role of servant leader. There is great fulfillment in creating environments for people to learn, grow, develop, and build functional skill that enables them to create value and respect others in the workplace, their homes, and their communities.

Benchmarking was a constant aspect of my experience as a leader, because it enables you to see differently to experience environments that have perhaps had a longer time and



experience on the journey. The challenges of leadership are much greater than simply possessing the right traits and abilities; it is a continuous process of creating new gaps toward higher levels of excellence and performance. I invite you to join me in the never-ending pursuit of principles, building companies with purpose, engaging team members through problem solving, and process improvement.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Hoseus is Executive Director for the Center for Quality People & Organizations (CQPO). Mike brings both manufacturing operations and specialization in human resource experience to CQPO, an organization developed in 1999 as a vision of Toyota Motor Manufacturing to share Lean Quality philosophy and human resource practices with education, business, and community organizations. Mike is co-author with Dr. Jeffery Liker of *Toyota Culture*. Prior to CQPO, Mike was a corporate leader for 13 years at Toyota Motor Manufacturing's Georgetown, Kentucky plant both in human resources and manufacturing.

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Changing the Trend Line: The CI Conference

James A. Workman

Vice President, Center for Technology and Research,
Printing Industries of America

The annual Continuous Improvement (CI) Conference is almost here—April 5–8 in Columbus, Ohio. After three decades, the conference continues to be the only industry event focused on helping printing and converting companies achieve operational excellence by applying Lean thinking and other management concepts. Attendees have directly linked reduced costs, lowered waste, and increased profit margins to ideas gained at the conference.

The conference, presented by Printing Industries of America (PIA) and Specialty Graphic Imaging Association (SGIA), is organized around four subject areas:

- **Leadership and Culture**
- **Processes and Tools—Fundamental**
- **Processes and Tools—Advanced**
- **Developing People**

This year's theme, *Developing Your Playbook for Success*, recognizes that there isn't a one-size-fits-all continuous improvement strategy. Each company takes the tools, knowledge, and resources for operational excellence and applies them in a way that makes the most sense for their business. It's analogous to a coach tailoring an offense to the strengths of the players. At CI 2020, we will provide up-to-date information and real-life examples that companies can use to improve performance. You'll hear from experts on how to motivate others and inspire lasting change. Companies that shun the value of a playbook to increase their rate of improvement put their survival in jeopardy.

By the numbers, there will be 24 keynote and breakout sessions, seven networking and social events, three pre-

conference workshops, and two plant tours. In short, there is content for everyone, whether they're already advanced in their knowledge or have just begun to explore the process of putting a systematic improvement strategy in place at their company.

The keynote lineup this year is led by Karen Martin and Mike Hoseus. Martin is a leading authority on business performance and Lean management who helps companies develop more efficient work systems and accelerate performance. Her keynote is based on her award-winning book, *The Outstanding Organization*. Hoseus was a longtime HR and manufacturing leader at Toyota's Georgetown, Kentucky, plant and is the co-author of *Toyota Culture: The Heart and Soul of the Toyota Way*. He'll describe how to create a system of people who are willing and able to solve problems.

Companies committed to the goal of operational excellence will gain practical ideas—many delivered by fellow printers—to rid themselves of inefficiencies, boost customer satisfaction, and get closer to their goal.

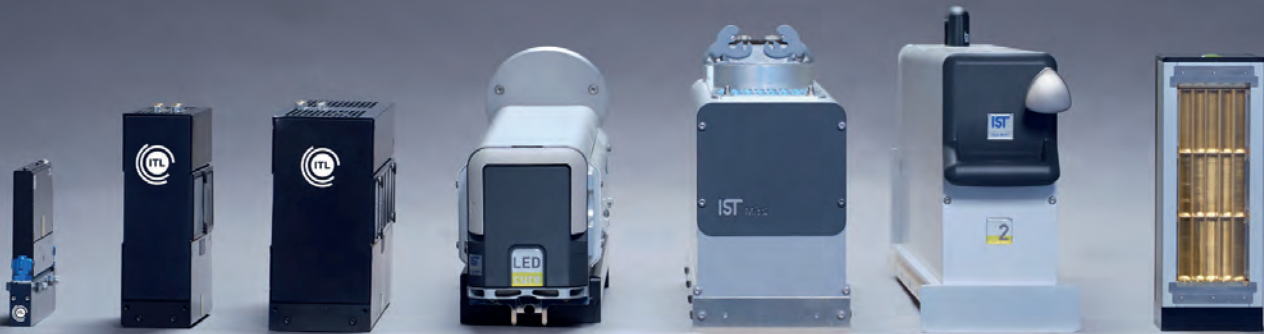
The conference consistently receives excellent reviews. In 2019, 99% of attendees said they'd recommend it to a colleague. Said one attendee, "**We have transformed our culture of continuous improvement from what we have learned at the CI conference. We plan on attending every year. It is beneficial for anyone, at any level of an organization.**"

Learn more about attending the conference by visiting www.ci.printing.org.

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Hopkins Printing

Sarah Sudar

Copywriter,
Printing Industries of America

Lean has taken over Roy Waterhouse's life. Not only is he conscious of the practices when he is serving as president of Hopkins Printing in Columbus, Ohio, but he also considers how Lean can help him train for triathlons and start his mornings more efficiently.

Hopkins Printing was founded in 1975 by Jim and Arnie Hopkins, starting as a quick-print shop and evolving to a full-service, offset, digital, wide-format, mailing, storage, and fulfillment company that now has over 100 employees and about 400 customers.

In 2007, Jim and Arnie were thinking of a succession plan and sold 100 percent of the company to their employees after examining multiple options. Jim was very concerned with the culture and the longevity of the company and ultimately decided that an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) was the best fit. Though he's sold the company, Jim is still at the office three to four days a week, serving as Hopkins's CEO at 79 years old.

"His brain is still very sharp and he still contributes his ideas to sales, production, building—you name it," says Waterhouse. "He's still involved in everything."

Before Waterhouse joined the company 30 years ago, he didn't have a background in printing. He was dating Jim and Arnie's daughter, Michelle, and Jim asked her to see if Roy had any interest in the industry. He worked two years while in college at an in-house print shop for a publisher and then started working for Hopkins.

Since the early 1990s, Hopkins has been implementing continuous improvement and Lean practices, with a





heavy focus on Lean from a basic standpoint: respect for people and reduction of waste. Waterhouse says the culture/people side is always the harder side to implement, and it's a matter of doing more training and more reinforcement because getting everyone on board is a huge ask.

Waterhouse says the company tries to get 20 people who really believe in the process and uses those people to share stories and ideas with others. They do daily huddles in every department on every shift. Daily, there's some kind of continuous improvement discussion and the company has even developed an internal reporting system where employees can report an issue that is causing them frustration. These problems are looked over and improvements are discussed in their weekly huddles.

"It's all about education and closing the feedback loop," says Waterhouse.

Lean also has a huge impact on customer service. Waterhouse says one of the biggest things he's seen with implementing improvements is being responsible to the customer. Though printing is a manufacturing business, customer service is also a heavy component.

“When we take the Lean tools that make our lives easier and point them at customers to make their lives easier, we have customers who will want to continue to come back and give us more work,” says Waterhouse.

Even though the printing industry is half the size that it was 20 years ago, Hopkins is 50 percent larger, and Waterhouse credits Lean for a good part of that. And to continue to grow, you have to hire good people and have good business practices, equipment, and training. Every concept of Lean needs continuous attention. It’s a never-ending cycle of improvement.

“Once you’ve spent 10 years on continuous improvement practices, another level of understanding opens up for the next 10 years, and so on, and so on,” says Waterhouse.

Hopkins has been at Lean for over 15 years, and there are still a lot of concepts they know about but aren’t at the stage to implement yet.

When starting out, most companies will focus on the 5S philosophy and the 7 Wastes of Lean. Waterhouse says it takes a while to instill those principles as part of a company’s thinking since it is something that has to be worked on every single day. But, once people start seeing how much easier life can be when small problems are taken out of the picture, they start to see the benefit of it.

He suggests that companies who pursue a continuous improvement mindset will be in the business of the future—they will be able to do better work for the long term and will mostly face wins over losses.

Personally, for him, Lean has allowed Waterhouse to free up his day. Before Lean, he was busy at work all day long, whether what he was doing was effective or not. Now, because of Lean, he says he has more time to sit and think, that it’s this time that he has to come up with ideas that make his life, his employees’ lives, and his customers’ lives better.



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Q&A

Josh Springer

Inventor, Bottoms Up Beer Dispenser
Founder, GrinOn Industries

Sarah Sudar

Copywriter,
Printing Industries of America

Josh Springer is living the American dream, only a little bit drunker. In 2008, he had a daydream to invent a pitcher that would pour beers from the bottom. After developing a prototype in the shed next to his house, the company now occupies a 26,600-square-foot facility in Indianapolis and ships to 47 countries all over the world. In 2017, he was introduced to the concept of 2 Second Lean and has been using the practices every day to make GrinOn Industries a household name.



When did the light bulb go off to create the Bottoms Up Beer Dispenser?

I was at my dad's birthday party at a Mexican restaurant drinking margaritas and daydreaming that it would be a good idea to have a pitcher of beer that would fill from the bottom. The light bulb went off in my head and I shared it with everyone. My dad said, "If it could be done, someone would have already done it," but I heard, "You can't do it." So, clearly my dad needed to be proven wrong. Four days later I had a working prototype made from car parts, a TV tray, and a bunch of random stuff I had laying around! I had a lot of negative energy around me at the time, so I took all of that and poured it into developing a solution for a problem that didn't even exist.



Q&A

How does it work?

The beer is not filled up by the bottom, but through the bottom. Every cup has a metal ring embedded in it and has a magnet that sticks to the ring. When the cup is put on the dispenser, the magnet is separated from the ring and beer goes in. When the cup is picked up, the ring comes back to the magnet and you have a cup of beer.

When you were introduced to the concept of 2 Second Lean, what immediately went through your head?

THIS!! THIS IS WHAT I'M MISSING! This is how my brain naturally works and now I have a means of communicating it to others.

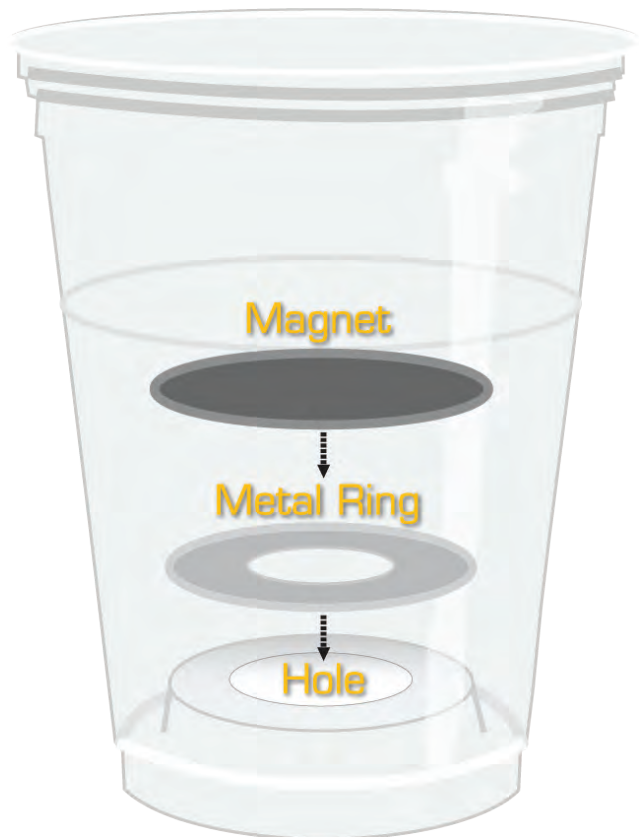
How have you seen Lean improve the business?

This question would take a novel to answer. Lean has not improved the business. It has improved the people that work in the business, and they in turn improve the environment around them in every aspect of their lives: home, community, and lastly our business.

If you aren't getting better and growing, you are dying. It is really just that simple. I have no idea how businesses function without a true Lean culture. So much waste is being passed on to the customer.

How has Lean unlocked the creative genius of your team members, and why is this important?

Everyone is free to fall forward. You can do whatever you want as long as it fits within our guidelines. You would be absolutely astonished at what people are willing to try and do if they are not afraid of failure and putting their ideas out there, knowing that they will be fully supported and encouraged to try again if they do fail.





Why You're Not Getting the Most from Your Training Dollars and How to Start Getting a Better Return

Kate Zabriskie

President,
Business Training Works, Inc.

Each year, organizations waste thousands of dollars on training that doesn't deliver what the people who bought it thought it would. Consequently, many of those remorseful purchasers determine that either training has no value to their employees, the training facilitators don't know what they're doing, the program designers are out of touch with reality, or all three.

If only the root causes of training failures were as simple as those. Even with willing learners, great content, and strong facilitation, you can still encounter a host of problems that will keep you from realizing strong returns on your training investment. If your training isn't delivering what you think it should, you may be suffering from one of three major problems that plague organizations big and small.

Problem One: Training isn't part of a larger learning ecosystem.

Just because people participate in a workshop doesn't mean they will change their behavior back on the job. In fact, even if while in class they demonstrate an ability and willingness to do whatever is being taught, all may be lost once participants exit the classroom.

Why does this happen? Good workshops usually fail to deliver because they are treated as a training solution instead of a component of one. In other words, a workshop isn't the answer in itself; rather, it should be part of a larger apparatus or ecosystem.

Solution

Creating a strong learning ecosystem is an ongoing and often complex endeavor. It takes time to build a holistic structure that supports continuous development. That said, start small. For example, ask yourself:

- Prior to training, do managers explain to people why they will attend a course and how they are expected to use what's learned after the session?
- Will someone with authority (other than the facilitator) launch the session by explaining how the workshop ties into the bigger picture?
- Are there check-in opportunities after training to ensure that participants are implementing new behaviors?

If you answered "no" to any of those basics, do what you need to do to shift those answers to "yes."

Next, think about the incentives you can put in place to encourage behavior change and the barriers you need to remove to encourage success and the corrective action you will take if what's happening in the classroom isn't replicated on the job.

Once you start thinking holistically and view courses and workshops as components of learning versus learning in its entirety, you will have taken the first step in getting the most out of your training dollars.

Problem Two: Continuous learning isn't part of the culture, and training isn't treated as a priority.

You have great content, you have a skilled facilitator in place, and yet, half the people scheduled to attend the course don't attend because training isn't a priority.

When training occupies a position of "nice to have" and not "need to have," getting the most from it becomes problematic. This most often happens when people are in survival mode instead of on a growth

trajectory. In other words, they are scrambling to get through the work instead of thinking mindfully about the work they're completing and how they're completing it.

In practical terms, if people are always putting out fires and don't regularly ask "What have we learned?" and "How can we improve?" why should they care about learning new skills?

Solution

Shifting from a reactive culture to one that is deliberate about its activities takes months or even years. However, it's not difficult to make big strides over time when you begin by asking the right questions up, down, and across an organization.

Start the improvement conversation at multiple levels and at different times. Frequently ask: What have

we learned? What do we need to do better next time? What do we wish we'd known earlier? and other such questions after projects, meetings, presentations, and so forth. In the rare instances when something goes perfectly, remember there are still questions to ask: How can we replicate what we just did? Why did that work well? Is there any reason this approach won't work again in the future? and so on.

When questioning becomes the norm, the solutions offered via training should have stronger importance and value. For example, if turnover is an issue, a learning organization wants to know why and may ask several questions: Are we hiring the wrong people? Are we expecting too much? Is there something better for the same money somewhere else? Do our managers not manage well? Do we

need to provide people with better tools? and so on.

Then, when learning and improvement are a priority, you'll hear such things as, "Today is a training day for me. I'll be unavailable until 4:00. If you have an emergency, please see my supervisor Melissa. The workshop I'm attending is of top importance and part of my effort to reduce the turnover in our department."

Who can argue with that? The logic sounds right and ties into big-picture improvement goals.

To get larger returns from training, use questioning to drive improvement. The answers will help people connect the dots and understand why training is a priority and not just something they do because their Outlook calendar tells them to show up in a classroom.



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Problem Three: Few annual development plans exist.

The world doesn't stagnate, and your employees shouldn't either. If they're doing their work the same way they were five years ago and nobody is encouraging or demanding change, why should they care about training or think you care about them?

Solution

Regardless of level, every employee should have a development plan and some learning and growth goals that connect to the big picture and enhance their skills.

"I want to improve XYZ skill to drive ABC result, and 123 is how I plan to grow," is a quick and easy format to follow when setting development goals, and three to five goals is a good number for most people.

Better still, if you can tie those goals to performance reviews, you'll be amazed at the interest people develop in improvement, training, and implementing new skills.

As with the other two solutions, start small. If your company, for example, has no development plans, choose a department and pilot them.

Act Now

Whether you suffer from one, two, or all three of the problems described, take action now. When thoughtful goals and development plans are put in place throughout an organization, people are conditioned to ask the right questions and drive toward improvement, and when a strong learning ecosystem supports learning, it is almost impossible not to realize a stronger return on your training dollars.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate Zabriskie is the president of Business Training Works, Inc., a Maryland-based talent development firm. She and her team help businesses establish customer service strategies and train their people to live up to what's promised. For more information, visit www.businesstrainingworks.com.

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James A. Workman · Vice President, Center for Technology and Research,
Printing Industries of America



As you likely already know, KPI stands for key performance indicator. Focusing on carefully selected KPIs is crucial for operational improvement, since they create an analytical basis for decision making and help focus attention on what

matters most. As Peter Drucker famously said, “What gets measured gets done.” KPIs also let you benchmark your performance against companies in this and other industries. You might think a spoilage rate of 2% of sales is good, for example, until you find out that industry leaders are at 0.5%.

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

- 🎯 You're a professional dedicated to improving your organization.
- 🎯 You are, in short, a devoted practitioner of continuous improvement.
- 🎯 You operate with an eye on the goals of increasing customer satisfaction, speeding production, and reducing costs.



YOU COULD BE A PRINTING INDUSTRIES OF AMERICA
CERTIFIED **IMPROVEMENT PROFESSIONAL IN PRINT!**

To be effective a KPI needs to be:

- **Relevant to corporate-wide goals and objectives**
- **Capable of being accurately and inexpensively measured**
- **Defined in an understandable and consistent way**
- **Easily understood by employees so that it is obvious how they can influence it**
- **Reported in a timely manner so employees can track performance against target**

KPIs are often financial in nature, net profit margin percentage being an example. When it comes to non-financial company-wide KPIs, a top PIA consultant, Steve Anzalone, recommends that companies start with these three metrics: on-time in-full (OTIF) deliveries as a percentage of total jobs, cost of spoiled work as a percentage of sales, and customer complaints.

Last year, PIA teamed up with the National Union of Printing and Communication Industries (UNIIC), the primary printing association in France, to conduct a survey on production-oriented KPIs. The emailed survey asked printing company executives to identify KPIs that were most important to their companies, the frequency that they measured them, and a variety of other aspects of KPIs. Seventy-two companies in the U.S. and Canada and 35 companies in France responded. The survey was co-designed by PIA, Ecograf on behalf of UNIIC, and BPIF (primary U.K. printing

KPI	Calculation	% of U.S. & Canadian companies*
Spoilage rate	Cost of spoilage / sales	70
Makeready time	Time from last good sheet of previous job to first good sheet of next job	68
On time in full	Jobs delivered on time in full / total jobs	68
Available press time for production	Planned time – downtime	66
Press utilization	Planned production time / total time	62
Not right first time	Jobs produced not-right-first-time / total jobs	62
Press performance	Total output/(rated speed x actual operating time)	60

*U.S. and Canadian respondents that used production-oriented KPIs and rated the KPI as “high” or “essential” importance.

association). About 70% of respondents identified their company, totally or in part, as a commercial printer.

The most commonly used production-oriented KPI was spoilage rate, followed closely by makeready time, OTIF, and available press time, as shown in the following table.

Remarkably, 32% of companies responded that they never use production-oriented KPIs, mostly due to “lack of available time and staff.”

Just over half of the companies using KPIs confirmed that their management information system (MIS)

software helps generate them. Over three-fourths of the companies reported sharing these KPI measurements with their production staff. Perhaps the most striking difference between survey respondents in the U.S. and France was OTIF—a significantly higher percentage of French companies measured it versus American company respondents.

A company truly striving to be operationally excellent must have a few non-financial KPIs that it routinely measures against targets, shares with employees, and uses to improve. If you are not already using KPIs, get started.

DEVELOPING A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CULTURE IN TODAY'S FAST PACED BUSINESS WORLD

When the concept of Lean thinking emerged in the 90s, it was cutting edge. Three decades later, our world is faster and interconnected. While the tenets of continuous improvement are still best to bring about lasting change, today's frenetic business landscape has altered how CI cultures are developed to build customer loyalty and boost bottom lines.

1

- Train employees in Lean methodologies
- Develop a feedback system across all lines of business
- Communicate organizational goals and objectives

SET AN EXPECTATION OF INVOLVEMENT

2

A study on hospital environments found that teams that rotated leadership of daily continuous improvement meetings helped to flatten hierarchies among the teams and open communication to improve patient care.

SHARE THE OWNERSHIP

3

- Put customer satisfaction at the forefront of business decisions
- Create a process of gathering feedback quickly and efficiently
- Review, analyze and react as an organization

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC OUTCOMES

4

With the wealth of technology at our disposal, try implementing more responsive metrics, tools and resources to maintain your project scope while being more aligned with rapidly changing customer needs.

RETHINK TRADITION

5

- Automate continuous improvement processes enabling consistent integration into business culture
- Deploy apps for mobile and tablet devices for use live on the shop floor to input and analyze real-time data

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY



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Best of the Best Workplace in the Americas Winners

 American Packaging Corporation	Columbus, WI (multiple locations)
 Communicorp, Inc.	Columbus, GA
 Hopkins Printing	Columbus, Ohio
 Suttle-Straus, Inc.	Waunakee, WI
 VISTAPRINT	Windsor, Ontario

Best Workplace in the Americas Winners

 Alcom Printing Group, Inc.	Harleysville, PA
Baesman Group, Inc.	Hilliard, Ohio
Boutwell, Owens & Co., Inc.	Fitchburg, MA
 CJK Group, Inc.	Brainerd, MN (multiple locations)
Corporate Communications Group	Upper Marlboro, MD
GPA Acquisition Company, LLC	McCook, IL
 Hammer Packaging	Rochester, NY
Inland	La Crosse, WI (multiple locations)
MBI Direct Mail	Deland, FL
 Midland Information Resources	Davenport, Iowa
 Midstates Group	Aberdeen, SD
MOSAIC	Cheverly, MD

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Additional Winners

Best Workplace in the Americas

Nahan Printing, Inc.	St. Cloud, MN
 Oliver Inc.	Hauppauge, NY (multiple locations)
Phototype Engraving Company, Inc.	Ohio (multiple locations)
Cincinnati,	Sun Prairie, WI
Royle Printing Company	Phoenix, AZ
Runbeck Election Services	Plymouth, MN
SeaChange Print Innovations	St. Paul, MN (multiple locations)
 Smyth Companies, LLC	Newport, KY
Steinhauser, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
Superior Lithographics	North Syracuse, NY
 Syracuse Label & Surround Printing	Minneapolis, MN
The John Roberts Company	Cleveland, Ohio (multiple locations)
The Millcraft Paper Company	Cincinnati, Ohio
United Mail	Oklahoma City, OK
 Vox Printing	Fort Smith, AR
Weldon, Williams & Lick, Inc.	Richmond, VA
Worth Higgins & Associates, Inc.	Stevens Point, WI
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Course instructor Jamie V. Parker harnesses her leadership expertise to bring Lean management theories to life by providing proven tactics to implement in your everyday work.

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