

Study questions to the book “Leadership – Making Lean a Success”

The purpose of these study questions is to deepen the reader’s knowledge. It is recommended that the questions are used in book clubs, where a group of people read chapter by chapter and have common discussions based on the study questions after each chapter. Answers cannot be downloaded which means that readers themselves are forced to find the answers in the book. We believe that this will facilitate the learning process.

Chapter 1

1. Which general stakeholder groups should an organization strive to satisfy?
2. Is there any stakeholder group that is more important to satisfy than the rest of them? Please motivate!
3. In which ways are the stakeholder groups important to an operation?
4. Customer focus is a common term in Lean, but who is the customer?
5. What does the expression “to strive for Lean” actually mean?
6. Give some examples of expected positive effects from a successful Lean effort:
 - a. Hard result parameters
 - b. Soft result parameters
7. What is a Lean culture?
8. What is required to create a Lean culture in an organization?
9. Why is it important to start a Lean effort at the top of the organization?

Chapter 2

10. Why is Lean called Lean? Where does it come from?
11. Name and describe the 7+1 forms of waste!
12. Which of these forms of waste is the worst from a leadership perspective? Why?
13. Describe the connections between values, Lean principles, methods/ways of working, and results!
14. What is the purpose of values?
15. Give examples of consequences that arise when an organization lacks clear and well-communicated values!
16. What does leveling mean?
17. Give examples of positive effects resulting from improved leveling!
18. What does standardization mean?
19. Give examples of positive effects resulting from improved standardization!
20. Which is, normally, the biggest challenge for an operation in its efforts to standardize how things are done?
21. What does standardized work mean?
22. Why should standardized work be time-bound?
23. Who should create standards? Why?
24. What is the difference between a value and a Lean principle?
25. What is the purpose of the Lean principles?
26. Name and describe the two principles under the main principle of Jidoka!

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27. Jidoka supports learning – why?
28. Why is it such an important part of Lean to focus on the flow?
29. Which are the three principles under the main principle of Just-In-Time (JIT)?
30. Describe, based on the conceptual model of Lean, how the respective Lean principle and basic condition are interrelated and how they contribute to approach the vision of highest quality, shortest lead time, and lowest cost!
31. Describe the PDCA method!
32. Why is the PDCA method important?
33. Describe the important connection between standardization and continuous improvements!
34. Continuous improvements are considered to be the most important form of improvement work in order to reach long-term success with Lean – why?
35. What information should form the basic contents on an improvement board?
36. What is a PICK chart and how does it work?
37. Why is it important to have improvement teams at all organizational levels?

Chapter 3

38. What is the difference between a manager and a leader?
39. Standardization is said to be the spinal cord of leadership – why?
40. What is the difference between management by means (MBM) and management by results (MBR)?
41. Which are the drawbacks of management by results (MBR)?
42. In what ways do management by means (MBM) contribute to reaching good results?
43. Give some examples of questions that are typical of management by means (MBM)!
44. Which are the two questions that a leader should always ask when a deviation is detected? Who or what should be the target of these questions?
45. A leader in an operation striving for Lean has two equally important tasks – which?
46. Why should the leader be the one who trains his/her subordinates?
47. Which are the three levels of learning that Konfucius once coined? How are they related to successful leadership in an operation striving for Lean?
48. What does Train the Trainer mean?
49. What does the Grandfather Principle mean?
50. Give some examples of important components in succeeding with getting employees committed!
51. Which are the four cornerstones (leadership principles) in leading towards Lean?
52. In what way is leadership a critical link to succeed with a Lean strategy?

Chapter 4

53. What characterizes a leader that is confident in Lean?
54. At what kind of occasions are subordinate leaders and employees at the most susceptible for absorbing Lean knowledge?
55. Describe how a leader, through his/her own commitment, can enthuse others! Give examples!
56. Why is it important for a leader to be firmly based in standard and facts?
57. The leader should challenge ways of working. What does that mean?
58. Give examples of how a leader can exhibit that he/she is free from prestige!
59. A leader should be reassuring. What does that mean?

Chapter 5

60. Give examples of important factors to consider when designing a Lean strategy!
61. Describe the six steps of leading improvement work!
62. Describe in what ways a thorough analysis of the present situation is important for successful improvement management!
63. What is the connection between the operation's goals and the prioritization model called the PICK chart?
64. What characterizes a goal that is SMART?
65. What is a suitable number of goals at each organizational level? Please motivate!
66. What is the risk of trying to grab a too wide an area in the ambition of improving the operation?
67. Give some examples of measures to deal with resistance!
68. Which are the two equally important tasks that employees have in an operation striving for Lean?
69. Why should individual rewards be avoided?
70. If individual rewards are still considered necessary – why is it important to somehow link them to the team's performance?

Chapter 6

71. Why is the leaders' conviction of Lean being the right path to walk an important condition for success with Lean?
72. Give examples of problems that may arise when this conviction is not strong enough!
73. Give examples of managerial behaviors that risk undermining the Lean related efforts being made within the organization!
74. Why is it problematic applying traditional financial control in an operation striving for Lean! Give examples!
75. Why is it important for top management to determine and communicate, at an early stage, how freed resources will be utilized?
76. What characterizes an organizational structure providing the right organizational conditions to succeed with Lean?
77. Why should it be managers, and not any support function, that drive the Lean-effort?
78. What is meant by an escalation ladder what is it used for?

Chapter 7

79. Why is it important that leaders spend their time close to the operation?
80. How come the issues concerning following up ways of working look basically the same at all organizational levels?
81. Give examples of risks related to underestimating the significance of the values!
82. What is meant by detailed steering of the personnel? Give examples of possible negative effects!
83. How is it possible for a leader to combine strategic thinking with a solid interest in the details of the daily operation?
84. Why is it important to explain any departures from the Lean principles?
85. Give examples of risks related to leaders not seeing deviations as possibilities to improve but rather as problems!
86. What is meant by questioning ways of working and not individuals?

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87. What does it mean to apply Lean to the own leadership?

88. Give examples of useful methods to support the efforts of improving leadership!

Any improvement proposals?

If you have suggestions for more questions, or if you think that some questions should be deleted or improved, please contact Mr. Ola Johansson at Part Development AB.

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