

Episode 16 Mark Graban

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Creating Lean and Healthy Organizations

People shouldn't hate going to work. When organizations have a culture of "the boss knows everything", employees shut down and become disgruntled. On the other hand, a **LEAN** organization creates a system in which people can be heard, are allowed to collaborate and share in the overall success.

In this episode, host, Cheryl C. Jones interviews Marc Graban, consultant, speaker, and author of several Award-winning books on the topic, of Kaizen – a Japanese business philosophy of continuous improvement focused working practices and personal efficiency. Together they talk about the concept of a LEAN organization. What does that mean and what does it have to do with Kaizen?

Mark's real genius is the ability to go into an unhealthy organization, know the right questions to ask, look for holes in processes and opportunities for things to go wrong, and work shoulder to shoulder to help people figure it out themselves.

Overall message-
Respect for humanity.

SUMMARY

As an engineer, Mark thought manufacturing would be his life. Until one day, an opportunity in the health care industry emerged and he took it. His advice is unique in that he successfully combines engineering with management and Kaizen to create healthy, sustainable work cultures.

His role as a consultant to unhealthy organizations is five-fold.

1. Ask the right questions
2. Look for holes in processes
3. Look for opportunities for things to go wrong
4. Work shoulder to shoulder to help people figure out the answers
5. Teach others to find the answers

When leaders give permission for input from their team, the answers that emerge are more authentic and sustainable. The process makes people feel better about their jobs, become more productive and they will take the skills they learn and apply them beyond the workplace.

The foundation of a lean, healthy organization is based on psychology of the people first. It is about respect for humanity and human nature.

Graban recognizes that people are “burned out, beaten down and broken by the systems” in which they work. “Better systems will drive the best results -People’s best efforts in a bad system won’t lead to success. .”-Mark Graban.

His advice:

- Stop reacting to the noise-reacting creates a swirl of activity that feels like it’s helping, but it doesn’t-it’s the rollercoaster effect.
- Lead better-step back and be less reactive and more systematic.
- See the signals and investigate them.
- Test changes
- Be flexible
- Be prepared
- Engage everyone and you will perpetuate improvement

“Having right answers isn’t enough if you haven’t engaged people in the process of figuring out the answer.”-Mark Graban

Influences-

- The book; *Motivational Interviewing for Leadership* available on Amazon.
- Former employees of Toyota who have shared the Toyota philosophy with him.
- W. Edward Deming, statistician, whose management genius was knowing how psychology and statistics come together and emphasizing the most important element for a leader is to understand psychology.

Next for Mark

Recording audio books
Working via Zoom to help organizations
Getting into the “new normal”

Connect with Mark

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Mark is the founder of www.LeanBlog.org

Books by Mark

- Lean Hospitals: Improving Quality, Patient Safety, and Employee Engagement.*
 - Healthcare Kaizen: Engaging Front-Line Staff in Sustainable Continuous Improvements*
 - The Executive Guide to Healthcare Kaizen.*
- And his most recent book, *Measures of Success: React Less, Lead Better, Improve More.*

Quotables

“Leadership’s responsibility is to create a system in which people can be a success.”-Mark Graban

“People shouldn’t hate going to work.”-Mark Graban

“People’s best efforts in a bad system won’t lead to success.”-Mark Graban

“Better systems will drive the best results.”-Mark Graban

“Having right answers isn’t enough if you haven’t engaged people in the process of figuring out the answer.”-Mark Graban