

“Speaking Out”

August 2010



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Robert is a trainer, consultant, and coach who specializes in Lean/Six Sigma training and deployment. Since 1997, he has been certifying students as Lean/Six Sigma Black Belts and Master Black Belts,

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Robert has worked in positions ranging from engineering to executive corporate management. His experience has brought him to the point where he now helps companies apply the methods proven to achieve true wealth, prosperity, impeccable quality and competitive positioning in world markets.



Lean Six Sigma

Recalling The Teachings Of Dr. Deming

By Robert D. Skillman

Do you recall Dr. Deming?

I do. Some things in the past are better forgotten, others are not. The teachings of Dr. Deming are among the things that should never be forgotten. We lost Dr. Deming December 20, 1993 following the most remarkable career one could imagine. The things Deming accomplished in Japan following the war are quite extraordinary. Driven by competitive position Western Companies in the 1980's began to seek out Deming and his teachings. His criticism of Western management methods along with how to think about data formed the spine of his message.



Prof. W. Edwards Deming

Early on Deming declared that workers labor within the system and management owns the system. Flawed systems deprive workers from the ability to do the quality job they intrinsically desire. This leads to a loss in pride of workmanship. Slogans, criticism, and beatings cannot generate productivity or quality. These things come from impeccable systems that are both capable and stable.

Another important point that Dr. Deming made over and over is the unnecessary reaction to non-signals which results in tampering with the process. This tampering, where none is warranted, leads to greater variation. Variation is the common enemy of manufacturing. The Holy Grail has always been to reduce variation around the aimed at target. The struggle has been separating the signals from the noise. We do indeed want to react to the signals revealed by data, but certainly not to tamper where no signal is detectable. There are clear methods to accomplish this, but discussion goes beyond the scope of this article. I would suggest the reader do a bit of internet research regarding Dr. Deming's Funnel Experiment. The Internet contains many fine examples of this excellent teaching example. The Funnel Experiment clearly demonstrates the devastating effects of tampering with process when none is required.

I would recommend to the reader truly interested in the teachings of Deming to read his milestone book, "Out of the Crisis". This masterful work is more germane today

W. EDWARDS
DEMING



OUT OF
THE CRISIS

than when it was written. If we could just avoid the Seven Deadly Diseases and follow the Fourteen Points that Deming promulgated, perhaps the future in manufacturing, in this country, would not be so bleak.

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