

Leading a Successful Lean Implementation: 4 Practices

1 Clarity

Ambiguity is the flip side of clarity. Follow these steps to deal with ambiguity:

- Identify the areas of ambiguity, the areas of clarity, as well as the boundaries between them
- Determine what to do, given the current understanding
- Make sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities to execute the action plan

2 Communication

Effective business communication changes behavior and is audience-centered. For people to change behavior, they need to understand what is being asked of them. Tell them what:

- Lean in the office is and how the Lean effort is relevant to their work
- actions they need to take in order to support the change
- tools and training they will need to expand Lean in the office
- measures will be used, as well as rewards and consequences
- success looks in like the Lean office
- difference it will make to their life at work (“what’s in it for them”)

3 Commitment

- Talk about Lean all the time
- Give your attention to Lean activities
- Ask your direct reports about their Lean activities
- Track Lean measures
- Support Lean teams by attending kick-offs and report-outs, and by asking about their progress; offer your help if they run into obstacles that they need help with
- Stay the course as your employees test your resolve with their resistance
- Stay committed in the face of challenging circumstances and in the midst of your own fatigue
- Seek counsel on how to implement and sustain Lean.

4 Constancy

- Be unwavering in purpose and focus
- Stay committed, publicly and privately