

SUMMER 2010/WSN 29

TIPS ON HOW TO GO LEAN

- Get everyone at your company involved
- Identify areas with the greatest client impact
- Flowchart these areas
- Use data to drive decisions
- Put repeatable processes in place



*The NSM team undergoes
Lean training*

North Star Goes Lean!

Last year I toured VIBCO, a company leading the Lean Manufacturing charge in Rhode Island. To say I was inspired would be an understatement. I struggled though in seeing how this could apply to a marketing company. Then, we visited their marketing department and I was hooked.

Fast forward several months and I couldn't get Lean out of my mind. I made the decision to put our entire team through Lean Training with Mike Schulde of Quality Leadership Network. We spent two half-day sessions learning what Lean was and another half-day discussing how we could implement it at North Star. We have reworked our new business process, our creative process and how a job travels through our shop. It is exciting to see us shift our mind set away from "that's how we have always done it" to "how could we do this better?"

Be sure to follow us on our Facebook and Twitter – where we will discuss Lean, our shift in mindset, the changes we have implemented, and the outcomes of North Star going Lean.

Happy Marketing,

April Williams McCrory
President & Visionary

TIME SAVINGS OF BETWEEN 30-50% ARE POSSIBLE TO NON-MANUFACTURING ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEAN.

—TORQUE MANAGEMENT

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Putting Ideas Into Action

Using a process map, the entire North Star team outlined the steps in our processes, the inputs and outputs for each step, the suppliers and customers and issues in the present process. This allowed all of us to understand the process (even if a team member was only involved in a small portion of the process), integrate knowledge among team members, enable communication between departments, facilitate analysis and as a result, improve our effectiveness. Any activity that consumed resources, but added no value for our clients, was up for grabs. **We focused on:**

- non value-added activities
- delay points/roadblocks
- cumbersome points
- documentation flow
- lack of understanding
- inconsistencies

At North Star, we believe that Lean is a continual process that will have a significant impact on any company. It's a shift in mindset that any company serious about competing in today's business climate needs to embrace. We hope you're inspired to look into Lean for your organization as you look at ways to make 2010 a year worth remembering!

Until next time,
The North Star Team



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