

NEWS RELEASE



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For immediate release

HANDS-ON SIMULATION PROVES EFFECTIVE LEARNING TOOL FOR INTERNALIZING LEAN PRINCIPLES

Novi, Mich., Feb. 7, 2006 – Since its found in 2001, the Lean Learning Center -- a leading provider of lean curriculum and consulting to a variety of industries -- has found simulation to be one of its most effective educational strategies in helping participants understand lean principles. Through its on-site Instructional Design Studio, the Center has designed numerous simulation activities that teach everything from the value of experimentation, the need for a common goal, simple workflow, value stream processing, and more.

“Simulation tends to be a very effective teaching technique for adult learning,” said Lean Learning Center partner Jamie Flinchbaugh. “It offers a hands-on (kinesthetic) approach in a quick, no-risk setting that forces time out for reflection at the end of the exercise – something that is lacking in most companies today. Also, we run most of our simulations more than once – repetition helps grow the knowledge base.”

The Center has an arsenal of lean manufacturing simulation exercises that it calls into practice depending upon the situation. During its Lean Experience class, an *Airplane Factory* simulation exercise is run twice – the first time prior to implementing lean thinking and the second after lean practices are put into effect. Teams are assembled and required to build three different model airplanes from Kinex building toys. A powerful tool, this exercise teaches the value lean processes including work instructions, common agreement, visual aids, work flow, Plan-Do-Check-Act, and more. Similar simulation games include the

Candy Factory, where teams have to assemble 3 variations of candy boxes and a smaller, portable exercise called the *Lean Quad*, where all the components needed to build variations of a four-wheeler ATV fit in an easy-to-carry tackle box.

As in the *Lean Quad*, many of the simulation exercises are designed to travel to customer locations. Other portable simulations include the *Maze Game*, which highlights the need for a common strategy; the *Cup & Dot*, which teaches how to achieve balanced workflow in a batch and queue environment; the *Paper Factory*, which is designed specifically for teaching work flow in administrative environments; and the *Mouse Trap*, implementing the board game that has been around for decades. The game is run three times, with participants allowed to change only two things each time in order to achieve their goal. It teaches the value of experimentation and incremental improvements.

Build a Better Mousetrap will be run as an interactive mini-workshop in the Society of Manufacturing Engineer's booth during WESTEC 2006 in Los Angeles.

"Our goal is to infuse our participants with a new way of thinking," continued Flinchbaugh. "We know that simulation helps people understand and internalize lean concepts, which they can then apply to a real-world environment."

To find out more about its Instructional Design Studio and customized simulation programs or to request a Lean Learning Center brochure, call 248-478-1480 or visit www.leanlearningcenter.com.

In conjunction with its corporate partner Achievement Dynamics, a provider of management consulting, the Lean Learning Center provides a full complement of lean transformation services. Industries served include manufacturing, healthcare, public utilities, retail, aerospace, communications, technology, investment equity, service and more.

Partners Jamie Flinchbaugh and Andy Carlino have recently authored a book titled *The Hitchhiker's Guide to Lean*, published by the SME. For more information visit

www.hitchhikersguidetolean.com.

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Photo Caption: The Candy Factory, just one of many hands-on simulation exercise run as part of The Lean Learning Center curriculum, helps internalize lean principles and rules.