

Progressions Inc.

Sales Training & Consulting



'Lesson Learned, Principles Confirmed'

FASTCAP (www.fastcap.com)

I recently had the unique opportunity to attend a 2 hour presentation by the incredibly innovative and progressive Bellingham company, FASTCAP. The principles introduced in this 2 hour session were basic and may fall into common sense, however in my 16 years of consulting I have never seen a company implement them better.

Principle of FASTCAP, Paul Akers has visited Toyota in Japan 3 times to obtain and further incorporate their incredible disciplines. Through his leadership and a 10 year journey his company today models the principles for thousands of others to follow.

Companies from all over the world visit FASTCAP in Bellingham to attend these 2 hour presentations and you can too. Be sure to visit their website to learn more.

With over 40 years of experience and 16 years as a consultant I found FASTCAP to be a total confirmation of the principles I've been introducing to clients on coaching and leadership with emphasis on employee development.

FASTCAP incorporates a 3 step approach for all employees through ongoing training. The end result is a self-managed, self-motivated, self-directed employee with incredible pride in their company.

They incorporate their LEAN approach introduced by Toyota. One of the key principles is for employees to feel so empowered that if they see something that "bugs them" they can simply... fix it. Not only can they fix it they are encouraged to fix it and one hour a day (before each day starts) is their time to make an improvement.

Imagine how much creativity and ownership is being fostered!

The group meets for 30 - 40 minutes for a team meeting each day and new ideas and ways of improving both activities at work and at home are shared. Six employees are called on randomly to share their morning insight for improvement. It can be a story about taking one's vitamins at home to creating an entirely new way of packaging prior to their



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products being mailed out.

During the presentation and tour 3 young employees gave their perspectives about the LEAN approach.

- “The LEAN approach changes everything”. If you don’t take a LEAN home you are foolish.
- “LEAN is really just common sense”, but it makes everything simpler.
- The LEAN principle creates pride in every employee to leave everything better than you found it.

There is such a pride instilled in each employee at FASTCAP that management really has very little to do. Coworkers hold each other accountable. For example, if a person were to leave the lunch table in disarray a coworker would kindly and appropriately point it out and demonstrate how it should be done. One could virtually eat off their bathroom floor or toilet seat for that matter as it is kept impeccably spotless at all times. Each employee takes their turn at cleaning it and having pride in the job that they do. Management at FASTCAP, (and there are very few in numbers) are expected to set expectations, inspect expectations and reinforce expectations.

This might seem like a “big brother” environment but in fact the culture of everyone doing their very best at each moment and living with expectations is so strong it doesn’t seem awkward at all for one employee to correct “another”.

The meetings held every day are delivered by all employees... everyone taking their turn. They share raving fan awards (comments from customers complimenting service or sales), the previous day’s results, a product review and new ideas. Everybody participates and is keen on doing so. They strive for a friction free environment and create an atmosphere where internal servicing i.e., helping of one another is just as critical as externally serving the customer.

Their goal is to grow their people which means:

- To take the principles of LEAN home
- Demonstrate attitude of gratitude and kindness for other coworkers.
- Learn everyday about the history, culture and literature including the Constitution of the United States
- Hold each other accountable

There are 7 magic bullets for building a LEAN culture as follows:

1. Teaching and training people.
2. The 2 second improvement every day from everyone.
3. Daily Morning 3-S: Sweep, Sort and Standardize.
4. Start a daily morning meeting.
5. Start your lean journey in the bathroom.
6. Start your lean journey slow.



7. Never start your lean journey until you are 1000% sure it is the right.

And last but certainly not least the results of building a LEAN culture are operational excellence and fun in the workplace.

You will find very few personal endorsements on my newsletters but FASTCAP and their way of developing people and providing service excellence is one that I personally take pride in sharing with you.

Enjoy the journey.

Lynn Giuliani



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