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LEAN1 Kaizen implementation: A “best case” analysis

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This study add insights to the concept on kaizen and its implementation process based upon an in-depth case study at OMN, a Japanese manufacturer in the Netherlands which has successfully adopted kaizen concepts. It was found that employee discipline and personal-initiatives are the two critical organisational capabilities for kaizen. Additionally, this study provides an insight that kaizen implementation process can be abstracted to two cycles which gives a different perspective to the existing models. Furthermore, this study suggests that a new area of improvement (e.g. quality, cost, and delivery-time) can be a regenerative input to keep kaizen life cycle alive.

LEAN2 Lean implementation within SMEs: a literature review

QING HU, SHARON WILLIAMS, ROBERT MASON, PAULINE FOUND

Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK

This paper reports on a literature review which examines lean implementation in Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The results identify trends related to lean approaches and concepts employed by SMEs. Other key discussion points from this review include definitions of lean, geographic coverage, sectors and research methods. The paper concludes with potential areas of further research.

LEAN3 The ‘formula of Lean’: Notes on the Kingman equation

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Despite its prominence, conceptualising Lean Thinking remains a challenge: commonly the 5 Lean Principles and/or The 7 Wastes are used, but these largely fail to provide any deeper insights into the role of the different types of variation on the process, nor do these offer any guidance into managing the interaction between Lean Production, Six Sigma and Service System Thinking when attempting to improve a process. In this note we will be revisiting Sir John Kingman’s equation of 1966 on single-server queues, and argue that many additional insights on Lean, its application across manufacturing and service operations, as well as its relation to Six Sigma can be learnt from this one equation. The note concludes with a set of key lessons to be learnt from Kingman’s equation how to improve waiting times in a general process.