

The Navigator delivers valuable information and tools that point you in the right direction to help you improve your manufacturing business. As always, we welcome your feedback on topics, future articles and more.

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Lead Story: Continuous Improvement Through Continuous Learning



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Continuous Improvement Through Continuous Learning

The Power of Reading

By Mike Vanier

In the dynamic world of manufacturing, continuous improvement is not just a strategy but a necessity. Your company faces unique challenges that demand a relentless pursuit of efficiency, quality, and innovation – a commitment to continuous learning.

Discover how you can create a culture of continuous improvement:

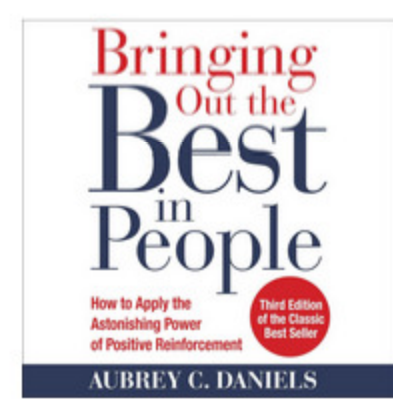
[Read the Article](#)

OMEP Recommends

To jumpstart continuous learning initiatives, we are creating a curated list of our recommended materials. You will find these on our [blog page](#) and we will add to this list in every newsletter. Here are three recommendations to kick this off! (Visit your locally owned bookstore or click on images to order.)



Eight powerful mindset shifts that enable leaders and seekers of all ages to thrive in a time of unprecedented change.



Fresh insights on employee engagement, technological impacts, and empowering diverse workforces.



Learn how to create a self-sustaining, time-efficient office, and optimize business process flow for operational excellence.

Insights From Our Team

Yvonne Muir, Senior Consultant



Empowering Your Team for Continuous Improvement

Continuing to learn about people and processes is a never-ending journey in my development. My heart has always been with the front-line employees.

Are their ideas being heard? Or are they just frustrated and shut down? In my opinion, people shut down because of a lack of action or communication by management.

Communication is important, even with those who are most difficult. Keep in mind that people don't need every problem solved. It may just require answering that difficult problem with, "Yes, I hear you, but I don't have an answer right now. I will investigate and get back to you on this date at this time." And, of course, follow through.

Three Key Strategies

- Prioritize your staff - remember they are the backbone of your organization
- Monitor your company culture and ensure it's heading in a positive direction
- Address issues promptly
- Set up regular one-on-one meetings to facilitate open communication within your team
- Try a Gemba Walk - take the time to visit employees at their workplace and touch base
- Embrace the philosophy of Oregon philanthropist Joan Austin: By taking care of your employees they'll take care of your products, leading to satisfied customers.

At OMEP, we can help empower your team for continuous learning.

[Contact Us Today](#)

Meet the New Board Members

Don Lindsey

President and CEO
Precision Machine and Manufacturing

Don Lindsey is an entrepreneurial leader with extensive experience in optimizing financial, technical, and operational functions. He has managed multi-million-dollar budgets, driving profitability, and been responsible for business growth across various industries.



Known for his strong leadership and problem-solving abilities, Don builds positive, team-oriented cultures and focuses on continuous improvement. His career highlights include maximizing top-line revenue, expanding global markets, and improving EBITDA.

Don's strategic approach and operational excellence have earned him recognition from colleagues and business partners. He currently applies his expertise to lead initiatives that align with Precision Machine's goals and values.

Melanie Doolin

CEO
Oregon Corrections Enterprises

Melanie has a rich and diverse work history, showcasing her leadership and organizational skills. She served as the Administrator/CEO at Oregon Corrections Enterprises, where she oversaw operations and strategic initiatives.



Prior to this role, Melanie was the Human Resources Director at Oregon Corrections Enterprises, enhancing workforce management and employee relations. She also has experience as a Human Resources Manager at the Wyoming Department of Health, where she honed her skills in talent acquisition, employee engagement, and HR policy implementation.

Success Story



Rogue Truck Body

When Rogue Truck Body faced doubled customer demand and constrained capacity, they turned to OMEP for help.

Through a series of lean manufacturing initiatives, including value stream mapping, Kaizen events, and implementing new systems, Rogue Truck Body significantly improved their efficiency and expanded their operations. The results were impressive, including substantial cost savings, job creation and retention, and a notable increase in sales.

Discover how Rogue Truck Body achieved these remarkable outcomes through strategic improvements and lean manufacturing principles.

[Read the Story](#)

New Team Member

Dana Markunas

Senior Consultant
OMEP

Dana is passionate about challenging the perception of what is possible. Her day has not begun if she has not helped someone connect their needs with a process improvement.



Dana loves taking the big picture and connecting it down to the smallest important detail while helping others see it too. She is constantly looking for how something can be made better.

We're excited to welcome Dana to our organization and know she will have an incredible impact on the manufacturers we serve.

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Event Recap



OMEP's Popular Ready or Not Event Delivers a Hands-On Business Experience to Columbia Gorge Manufacturers

Oregon manufacturing professionals recently put their skills to the test at the first *Ready or Not!* business simulation game held in the Columbia Gorge on June 25, 2024.

This innovative event challenged participants to navigate real-world business scenarios in a competitive, immersive environment. Teams made strategic decisions, managed KPIs, tackled unexpected challenges, and gained years of business experience in just four hours.

The event showcased the power of hands-on learning and collaboration in preparing local professionals for future business challenges.

[East Cascades Works](#) summarized the takeaways in this blog post.

[Read the Story](#)

OMEP was proud to host this event in partnership with: Columbia Gorge STEM Hub, Business Oregon, Columbia Gorge Small Business Development Center, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Gorge Tech Alliance, and East Cascade Works – all of whom do great and important work in the region.