



JACKSONVILLE LEAN CONSORTIUM

“Strength in Numbers”

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Jacksonville, Florida, located in the northeast corner of the sunshine state defied all the odds in 1993 when it persisted and was awarded an NFL franchise, the Jacksonville Jaguars. Leaders within the community spent over twenty years trying to bring an NFL team to this football hungry town. The city accomplished the improbable again in 2005 and received tremendous worldwide attention when it hosted Super Bowl XXXIX. Jacksonville certainly has proven that it has the determination to achieve aggressive goals.

The region which has been dubbed the First Coast is beginning to develop a big appetite and passion for Lean thinking. A growing number of companies and organizations in Jacksonville are engaged in Lean implementations and are diligently eliminating waste and continuously improving customer satisfaction. The catalyst for this Lean transformation is the FCMA Jacksonville Lean Consortium. The Consortium is currently part of the First Coast Manufacturers Association. FCMA, a trade non-profit organization was founded in 1989. It has grown to be a highly successful voice for over 2,000 manufacturers in the region. The FCMA has over 300 members including manufacturers and affiliates. Its primary goal is to serve manufacturers through a wide range of programs and activities specifically designed to improve members' profitability. FCMA emphasizes three basic objectives: educating the workforce, protecting the environment, and improving the economy. As a member of the board of directors, I suggested that the organization consider forming a consortium of members who could help each other to implement Lean, in order to improve their businesses. Lean seemed like a perfect fit, based on the objectives of

FCMA. As Vice President of Global Operations at Medtronic Xomed, a medical device manufacturer, we began our lean journey in 1999. We were able to make substantial improvements in our business over a relatively short period of time. Our Jacksonville facility was fortunate enough to be recognized in 2002 by Industry Week Magazine as one of the ten Best Plants in North America. In 2003, the facility was awarded the Shingo Prize, which has been called the noble prize of manufacturing excellence. Medtronic Xomed's success helped to pique the interest of FCMA members and the Jacksonville community. Tours of our facility by local companies and organizations helped build enthusiasm regarding the application of Lean principles and concepts.

Lad Daniels, the President of FCMA and a highly respected civic leader was intrigued with the idea of forming a Lean consortium. It seemed like everything was falling into place. Bruce Ferguson, the CEO of WorkSource attended a presentation where the concept of the Lean Consortium was described and a bold vision of taking Lean throughout the community was shared. WorkSource is a non-profit workforce development agency. Bruce Ferguson indicated that he would try to pursue public funding to help us get the consortium started and spread Lean thinking in the community. We were able to get a government grant for \$375,000 over a three year period based largely on the efforts of Bruce Ferguson and Lad Daniels. We were very fortunate to come in contact with David Chao, President of Lean Sensei International, who at the time was managing a Lean consortium in Vancouver, Canada. We signed an agreement with David Chao to help us start up the consortium and provide support over a three year period. We had the blessing of the FCMA board of directors and were able to recruit 17 members. The FCMA Jacksonville Lean Consortium was founded in November 2003. Its mission is to collaborate in order to improve the performance of businesses and organizations on the First Coast, and to promote economic growth through the implementation of Lean Thinking methods and tools. The objectives of the consortium are:

- Provide educational opportunities for members of the organization to effectively implement lean practices.
- Work together to assist our members in achieving world-class results through Lean implementations.
- Establish the First Coast as the center of excellence for implementing Lean thinking in the United States.
- Utilize our success to promote economic development and attract new business throughout the First Coast.

We developed the organizational structure and plans for the consortium in January 2004 with the assistance of David Chao and Lean Sensei International. A three year plan consisted of:

Year 1	Organize, baseline and learn
Year 2	Build internal resources and show visible improvements
Year 3	and beyond, play a role in future consortiums

Among the initial members were Atlantic Marine (ship building), Jacksonville Electric Authority (public utility), WorkSource (workforce development agency), Swisher International (cigar manufacturer), Naval Air Depot (military airplane repair), Rex Packaging (carton manufacturer), Goodrich Aerospace and Medtronic ENT (medical device manufacturer).

The primary focus of the consortium during the first year was to provide training to the consortium members. The consortium was very fortunate because many of the companies who had Lean experience devoted their training materials. A group was organized to develop and deliver training. We had some very skilled trainers who volunteered a substantial number of hours to conduct training sessions for the members. The support of the member companies in freeing up individuals for training and to help other companies beginning their Lean journey was a big factor in the consortium's success during the first year.

The training during the first year included Introduction to Continuous Improvement, 5S, and Value Stream Mapping classes. We held monthly meetings of consortium members which we called Lean Leader Forums. The meetings were held on Thursdays from 12:00 noon until 4:00 p.m. hosted at a member company. The meeting consisted of the host company providing lunch, presentation of their progress on their Lean journey, and Lean strategy. We would tour the facility and provide feedback and ask questions. We conducted all consortium business during the last hour of the meeting. We established a very lean effective monthly meeting which has worked out very well.

During the first year, we also established an internet website which enabled the consortium to provide effective communication. The website included the following meeting invitations, newsletter, training, meeting minutes, calendar, list of members, and audit/interviews. The biggest contributor to the success of the consortium has been Amy Erickson. Amy was trained as a Master Lean Sigma Black Belt at Crane Aerospace and assumed the position of Lean Coordinator for the consortium in August 2004. Her leadership, dedication, skills and passion have made an enormous difference in helping the consortium to be successful.

In October 2004 a local newspaper published a major article promoting the work of the consortium and the vision to spread Lean thinking throughout Jacksonville and the region. We started to get a tremendous amount of

inquiries regarding joining the consortium. During this period of time we also met with the Sheriff of Jacksonville about having his organization join a future consortium. Sheriff John Rutherford made it very clear that he wanted his organization to become a member. Based on the enormous demand we started a second consortium with another 16 members in June 2005. This second group received help from members of the first consortium. The second consortium included the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Department of Environmental Protection Agency and the Building Department of the City of Jacksonville. The influence of the consortium was beginning to impact a broader spectrum in the Jacksonville community. The members of the second consortium have been very successful and have worked together to achieve some very impressive results in their businesses and organizations.

In February 2006, we invited James Womack to visit Jacksonville and to be the keynote speaker at the city's Workforce Development Conference. Jim co-authored the books *The Machine That Changed the World* and *Lean Thinking*. During Jim's visit we stopped to see my dentist, Dr. Sami Bahri. Womack was amazed with what Dr. Bahri had accomplished in applying Lean thinking to dentistry. At one point Jim turned to Bahri and exclaimed, "I want to hug you; you are the Leanest dentist on the planet." We visited next with Sheriff John Rutherford, a passionate leader who has demonstrated that he is fully committed to implementing Lean in his organization. Sheriff Rutherford's organization has achieved incredible results which will be described in an article by Dr. Robert Hall in an upcoming issue of AME Target Magazine. Jim Womack's next visit consisted of meeting with the Mayor of Jacksonville, John Peyton. A five minute meeting turned into a two hour discussion. Mayor Peyton asked Jim Womack to attend his staff meeting the following day. The City of Jacksonville signed a partnership with the Lean Enterprise Institute (LEI) – Jim Womack's non-profit organization to help the city apply Lean thinking to city government. The vision of spreading lean thinking throughout Jacksonville was beginning to take place. Jim Womack was quoted in a Jacksonville magazine commenting on the FCMA Jacksonville Lean Consortium, "So it was a great pleasure in Jacksonville to find an organization that brings together the whole community including activities far removed from manufacturing where Toyota originally pioneered lean concepts."

Fast forwarding to 2007, in January the Jacksonville Lean Consortium sponsored a Lean Government Day where Mayor Peyton and Sheriff Rutherford spoke before more than 100 attendees. And in February 2007, the FCMA Jacksonville Lean Consortium founded a third consortium with a goal to move overall consortium membership companies and organizations to 48 by December 2007.

The 19th Annual Shingo National Conference was held in Jacksonville in March 2007. Some of the top “Lean Thinkers” in North America made presentations at this prestigious Lean conference. It was the most successful Shingo conference ever held with over 500 attendees. Sheriff John Rutherford gave a talk on Lean Leadership and received a standing ovation. The only other standing ovation at the conference was received by Dr. Sami Bahri who described the application of Lean Thinking in dentistry. The reaction at the conference was a good indication of the quality of results which have been achieved by consortium members.

The FCMA Jacksonville Lean Consortium has helped consortium members to achieve dramatic improvements in their companies and organizations. Even more importantly the consortium has fueled the adoption of Lean thinking in many areas of the community. Jim Womack indicated in a local magazine interview that he has never seen such an open adoption of Lean thinking. The strength and influence of the consortium is helping Jacksonville to drive towards its long term goal of becoming the first Lean community in the United States.

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