

Care & Growth and Lean

Not very often new ideas completely change our way to look at doing business and run a company. But it happens. If you look back a few years it's very likely that almost every CEO in the western hemisphere would do the following ranking after importance:

1. Efficiency and Finance (for the sake of the owners)
2. On-time-delivery (for the sake of invoicing)
3. Quality of delivered products (for the sake of invoicing – and the cost implications)
4. Environment, health and safety (for the sake of invoicing – and cost implications)

Lean Manufacturing theory, following the experiences and success of the Toyota Production System, has turned this ranking up-side down, thus becoming:

1. Environment, health and safety (for the human sake)
2. Quality of delivered products (for the customer's sake)
3. On-time-delivery (for the customer's sake)
4. Efficiency and Finance (for the owner's sake)

More and more leaders are finding the logic and beauty with this priority – and with the results following it. In a similar way the Care & Growth Model for leadership is turning common rankings up-side down. I think we wouldn't be surprised if many managers, honest to themselves, would present the following ranking on why they wanted to work as a manager:

1. For the status, the challenge and/or the higher salary
2. For the best of the organisation
3. For the best of the people in the organisation

Care & Growth turns this ranking up-side down. By putting the subordinates first (both caring and growing) you are not only doing the best for them, you also do the best for the organisation, its owners and its customers. With this you create the opportunity for larger financial yield for all stakeholders, the share holders included.

Both Lean Manufacturing and Care & Growth turn old priorities and driving forces up-side down. Of course you don't do that without being questioned and opposed. But it has become more and more difficult to question Lean because of Toyota's proven success, and the successes of many followers.

Both Lean and Care & Growth share the notion of putting the human, including the society and customers, in the centre. Most of us would agree that that is good – but many of us would add: “... as long as it doesn't hurt ourselves or the organisation too much.” But the good thing is – it doesn't, at least not in the long run. On the contrary, by putting the employees' wellbeing and growth in focus, the organization, including its customers and owners, will prosper. But remember, putting the employees in focus doesn't mean soft leadership. It means both caring and growing – a much stricter leadership than what tend to be the norm today.

Even if the Care & Growth leadership model has evolved in parallel to, and completely without influence from, Lean Manufacturing theory, so are both born from the same spirit. In table 1 I have tried to illustrate similarities and differences between the two. The characteristics in the table's left hand column have been checked by JMAC's consultants (via Mr. G. Frick), based on their extensive Lean knowledge from Japan and Europe. The characteristics in the table's right hand column have been checked by Mr. E. Schuitema, the father of the Care & Growth Model.

important characteristics in Lean Leadership	important characteristics in Care & Growth Leadership
LEADER'S KNOWLEDGE The leader shall have knowledge of the working area and understanding the holistic goals and challenges <i>[enables the giving of means and ability]</i>	LEADER TO GIVE MEANS The leader shall give means or make possible for the subordinate to get means to do a proper work <i>[requires knowledge]</i>
LEADER'S PRESENCE The leader shall be present, e.g. in daily control meetings and to quickly solve problems <i>[enables watching the game]</i>	LEADER TO WATCH THE GAME The leader shall observe the work and give feedback based on the subordinate's work contribution <i>[requires presence]</i>
LEADER TO TEACH The leader shall teach subordinates, e.g. problem solving techniques <i>[leader's own teaching is subset of giving ability]</i>	LEADER TO GIVE ABILITY The leader shall teach or make possible for other ways for the subordinate to gain ability <i>[leader's own teaching is subset of giving ability]</i>
REMOVE WASTE The leader shall mobilize the team to constantly look for different type of waste and remove it <i>[unnecessary control being a crucial type of waste]</i>	LEADER TO REMOVE CONTROLS The leader shall remove unnecessary controls ("snake killing") to make accountability clearer <i>[unnecessary control being a crucial type of waste]</i>
STANDARDIZE and IMPROVE The leader "owns" the working standards and must see to that it's documented, variations removed and continuous improved through iterations (Kaizen) <i>[standards enables accountability and improvements]</i>	LEADER TO HOLD ACCOUNTABLE The leader shall hold subordinates accountable to agreed standards. <i>[requires working standards]</i>
PACE and LEVELED LOAD The leader shall level each work station load to the demand so that core process get a stable pace (Takt) and an even work load	The leader must understand the system and provide the means (e.g. Lean or TOC tools)
SUBORDINATE RAPID SUPPORT The leader shall subordinate support needed to keep the core going and set system for rapid problem solution (Andon, Root cause solution tools, e.g. Ishikawa)	The leader must understand the system and provide the means (e.g. based on Leadership Diagnostics)
ECONOMIZE The leader shall set examples by practice strict economy on own and company expenses	LEADER TO SET EXAMPLE The leader shall grow her own intent and set good examples by giving subordinates Care and Growth
LEADER TO TRUST and RESPECT The leader shall trust the teams (e.g. quality circles) to find and implement solutions	LEADER TO TRUST and RESPECT The leader shall trust that the individual is able to grow
CUSTOMER FOCUS The leader shall have the satisfying of customer's needs (both internal and external customers) as the leading star	CUSTOMER FOCUS The leader shall use the customer's needs (both internal and external customers) as the main drivers to grow and enable every subordinate
CONTINUOUS IMPROVE The leader shall continuous improve operations <i>[requires enabled people]</i>	CONTINUOUS GROW The leader shall continuously grow her people <i>[enables improvement of operations]</i>
	LEADER TO EMPOWER The leader shall, in small or larger increments, let go of control. ¹

Table 1 Similarities between Lean and Care & Growth

Lean and Care & Growth show many similarities to each other. Both focus on contributions in processes, creating value for the customer. Thus both can in that sense be regarded as being part of a quality system. Both focus on the removing of the root causes that prevent improvements. And both focus on humanistic purposes outside the sole monetary interest of the owners.

However, Lean has a greater focus on the system and its continuous improvement, while Care & Growth has a greater emphasis on the individual employee and her continuous growth.

¹ NOTE: Empowerment means that less rigid standards are needed when subordinates mature.