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From the bookshelf

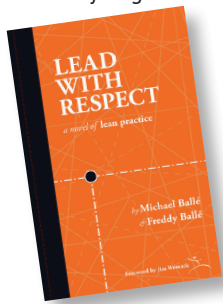
BY DR. TIMOTHY HILL

Lead With Respect:

A Novel of Lean Practice,

by Michael Ballé and Freddy Ballé

This book tells the story of CEO Jane Delaney of Southcape Software. She is forced to review everything that she's been doing and, in the process, discovers from her sensei, Andy Ward, that learning to lead with respect enables her to help people improve every day.



"For us, lean is all about challenging yourself and each other to find the right problems, and working hard every day to engage people in solving them," said Ward.

One of the true powers of lean is the ability to develop people while building a culture of continuous improvement. Some people believe that lean is successfully implemented by following a rigorous application of proven tools and methods. In fact, lean's successful implementation comes from changing the culture to one of continuous improvement. And that means asking the right questions when faced with an anomaly, getting down to the correct root causes and approaching everything with a "Why?" attitude.

Lead With Respect has a timely message. While lean has become essential for companies to compete in today's global economy, most practitioners see it as a rigorous focus on process to produce higher quality goods and services. This really is a limited understanding and it's one that fails to realize the true power of lean. It's no wonder people ask whether they should mention Toyota when doing their lean training. They've forgotten the basics, which is what this book delivers.

The authors have also written *The Gold Mine* and *The Lean Manager*, but this work shares huge amounts of practical information on the most important yet least understood aspect of lean management: how to develop people through a rigorous application of lean tools.

The Checklist Manifesto – How to Get Things Right, by Atul Gawande

This book is one that I've discussed before in my column, but I think it's worth revisiting. It makes the case for making something complicated simpler. Although Gawande uses many medical examples of where simplicity is needed, it is truly required in areas as diverse as software engineering, financial management, fire fighting, policing, the law and, of course, clinicians.


Readers will appreciate the B-17 story from chapter two. The B-17 crashed on its test flight on October 30, 1935. The "Flying Fortress" went on to help gain a decisive air advantage in World War II. Right after the accident, the test pilots created a pilot's checklist because the new airplane was too complicated to be

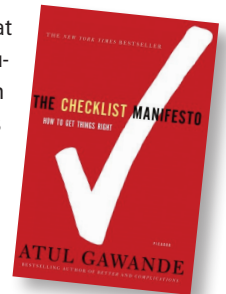
left to the memory of any one person.

Gawande is really interested in a problem that afflicts virtually every aspect of the modern world — how professionals deal with the increasing complexity of their responsibilities. He makes a distinction between errors of ignorance (mistakes we make because we don't know enough), and errors of ineptitude (mistakes we made because we don't make proper use of what we know). Most of the time, the mistakes that we make are about the

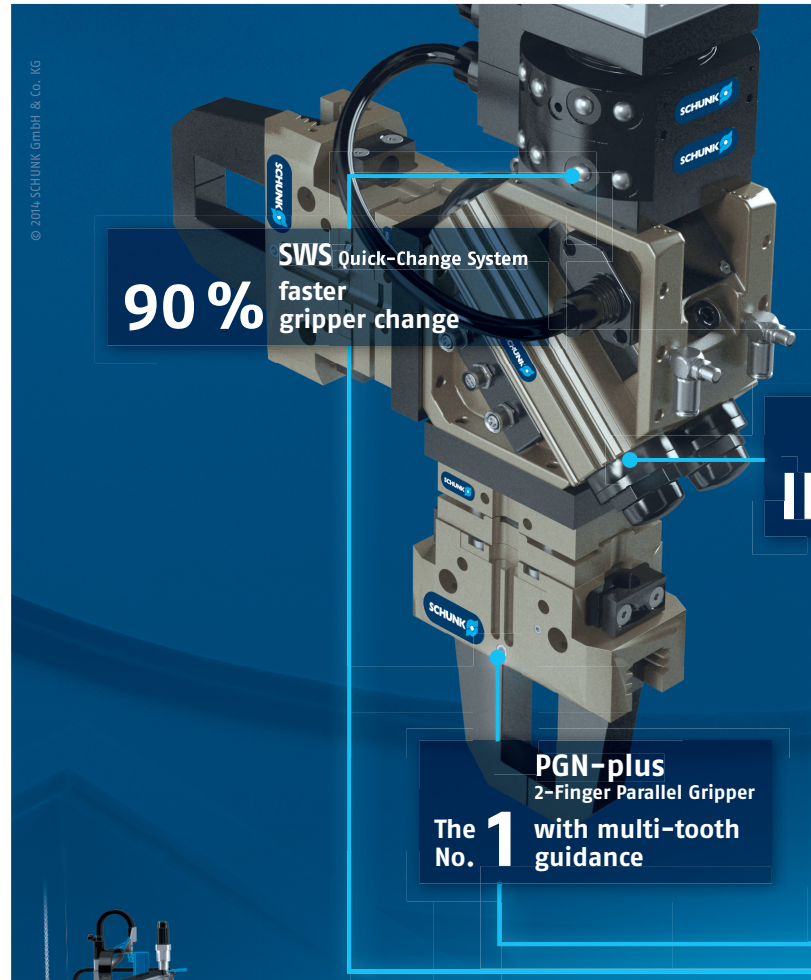
second of these errors. He introduces the origins of the checklist (the B-17 story) and then takes us through a series of examples from medicine, showing how the routine tasks of surgeons have now become so incredibly complicated that mistakes are virtually inevitable.


As our manufacturing systems get more complex, it gets easier to make "errors of ineptitude." Having a checklist overcomes these errors because we're now making proper use of what we know.

Think about what happens in your manufacturing operation and where mistakes have become almost inevitable. I once had a manufacturing client that had an 80 per cent failure rate for their most important product. A simple checklist eliminated this error! 



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