

Foreword

The management concept Lean Six Sigma claims to improve company performance by creating zero-defect and lean processes. Its enormous popularity is based on success stories from major multinational companies which have recognized early, that Lean Management and Six Sigma do not present competing philosophies but should be combined to one single concept in order to maximize the benefits of both approaches. Many companies have attempted to copy these success stories by investing heavily in the underlying methodology for structured process management to reach a rational and disciplined organization enabling processes, products and services with a zero-defect-quality. However not all companies have been successful, as they have underestimated the possible strong impact of human attitudes and behaviors embodied by concepts like the phenomena of National Culture and the concepts of Corporate Culture and Leadership Style.

Miriam Jacobs performed an innovative scientific analysis on an advanced methodological level related to cultural and leadership aspects of Lean Six Sigma as she analyzed this area of conflicts in her research. She offers one of the first scientific approaches to understand the importance, to analyze cause-and-effects relations and to derive deeper insights into the functioning of such a comprehensive pattern of soft factors. Miriam Jacobs examines the relationships and impacts between the five variables Lean Six Sigma, Corporate Culture, National Culture, Leadership Style and Corporate Success. Conducting profound theoretical and methodological investigations lead to a consistent hypothesized model, which is tested with original data of a panel of Lean Six Sigma professionals around the globe.

The results reveal that the concepts Corporate Culture and Leadership Style have the biggest impact on successful Lean Six Sigma implementation and Corporate Success while the phenomena of National Culture turns out to

have a minor influence. The analysis is complemented by a cluster analysis, disclosing that the underlying value dimensions in the variables Corporate Culture and Leadership need to be equally balanced in order to increase competitiveness of a company.

To account for the complexity and interdependencies between the analyzed variables this research uses structural equation modeling focusing on Partial-Least-Squares (PLS) as the more advanced and innovative technique of this methodology. This is even more convincing as the hypothesized model owns characteristics which are not suitable for the more traditional covariance based approaches.

This excellent PhD thesis with a wide range of advanced recognitions related to this field of research legitimates the inclusion into our series of outstanding scientific research. We hope that this publication in English will spread the recognitions worldwide and will advertise the results to a broad audience of professionals in the field of Lean Six Sigma. Practical insights of behavior and management approaches can be derived from the scientific concept and findings on this high level of management. The assessment of opportunities and risks of actions for managers in certain situations give hands-on guidance and inseminate further research about the cultural impacts in quality management.

Prof. Dr. Armin Töpfer

Cultural Impact on Lean Six Sigma and Corporate
Success

Causal Analyses Considering the Effects of National
Culture and Leadership

Jacobs, M.

2015, XXVIII, 320 p. 70 illus., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-658-07339-8