

FOREWORD

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We have heard of the saying, *“The only thing constant is change”*. While this saying is often overused by many businesses, the tools and practices that go with it are often not understood or terribly implemented. Change and continuous improvement is an on-going force field that cannot be resisted by Manufacturers – no matter where in the world they are located. With Global competition and the theories of Thomas Friedman’s book *“The World is Flat”*, we must continue to innovate and improve ourselves in the most efficient and effective manner while maintaining a culture of acceptance, excitement and above all, engagement.

It was through Stephen where I earned a discrete education in Continuous Improvement while utilizing the most thorough, solid, management practices needed to implement effective change management where our company was able to double our revenues in only 2 years. While being a Make-to-Order company providing engineering, manufacturing, and assembly of complex rollforming systems, we had our challenges to deliver custom projects. We implemented a completely new ERP system through all departments from scratch and a Project Management process that many automotive companies would be proud to own. Many of the change elements Stephen discusses are the need to seamlessly integrate the people and culture, business processes, physical structure, computer technology and information structure. One cannot make change happen without balancing each of these areas.

Our ERP system was not simply a matter of purchasing and implementing a computer software program. Many companies make the mistake to let IT select a system and start implementing from the financial department down. WRONG! Stephen’s team approach started from software selection, team naming and creation, group technology implementation, “as-is” and “to-be” business mapping, continuous education to running a pilot project. The systems in place have enabled us to deliver more cost effective projects, on time with superior quality.

Another business tool Stephen discusses is the adage, *“What get’s measured, get’s managed”*. Without knowing where you are and where you want to be, businesses cannot define where their time needs to be spent. We are true believers in managing the numbers and implementing change to correct the problems. Continuous Improvement cannot be seen if you don’t manage the numbers and respond accordingly. Our ISO 9001 Registration audits are a pleasure to have as we “show-off” our objectives and Continuous Innovations the company is working on.

Success will come to those who read, and implement the methodologies presented in this book pertaining to Continuous Innovation and Change. It provides the tools needed to do it right the first time, a phenomenon that does not exist very often when dealing with such a complex issue in business today.