Lab Exposure Continues to Grow

This 4th edition of our newsletter summarizes activities from the winter and spring quarters of 2009-10. Highlights of the past 6 months include new staff members, a new course, few improvement projects, and an award.

Curriculum
We launched a new lab-only course called “Production Systems Practicum”. The intent of this course is to expose engineers from different disciplines to the concepts of lean. The course was a success as we had a nice mix of graduate and undergraduate students from 4 programs.

Award
The Lean Division of the Institute of Industrial Engineers presented their 3rd annual award for Excellence in the Teaching of Lean Concepts to RIT faculty members Andres Carrano, John Kaemmerlen, and Jacquie Mozrall. The capabilities of the lab and how they are integrated into the curriculum were key elements for this award. Jacquie Mozrall accepted the award and delivered a presentation of our activities at the Annual IIE Conference in Cancun, Mexico.

Industry Visits
Andres Carrano visited the Tsutsumi plant in Japan this past November, where he interacted with team members from the Motomachi plant. He also had the opportunity to review Toyota’s vehicle dismantling and recycling operations.

Improvement Projects
We completed more improvements in the lab. One project was planned using an A3 and resulted in freeing up 25 sq. ft. of space in the lab (target was 20) which we needed to accommodate new activities.

Imagine RIT Festival
RIT held its 3rd annual “Imagine RIT” festival on Saturday, May 1. Some 28,000 people visited the RIT campus this year, a significant increase from last year. In 2009, we estimated that 450 people visited the TPS lab. This year, we actually counted 830! We added a “lego challenge” game for younger people to build a lego car and be timed. The instructions for assembly were completely visual (see picture above) so participants experienced the value of that type of standard work instruction format. We also created posters that explained pull, heijunka, 5S, A3, and other elements of lean that are taught in the lab. We wrote 17 comments about how we performed during the festival and will use these to make improvements next year.

Staffing
The festival is one of several recent activities that took advantage of our staff of graduate students which was increased in spring quarter to five, the most we have had so far, due to our busy course schedule. Ainoa Mazeika, Manny Sosa, Lauren Farnsworth, Anuj Datar, and Vignesh Aswaran supported this and other efforts throughout the two quarters.

We welcome your continued feedback and suggestions; contact Prof. Andres Carrano (alceie@rit.edu) or John Kaemmerlen (jxkpdm@rit.edu)