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Podcast Transcription
Implementing Lean Marketing Systems



A Lesson in Visualality

Guest was Mick Wilz and Bob Petruska

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Transcription of the Podcast

Joe Dager: *Welcome everyone! This is Joe Dager the host of the Business901 podcast. With me, today is Mick Wilz and Bob Petruska. Mick is the Director of Enterprise Excellence and a Co-Owner of Sur-Seal Corporation. He is very active in his community locally and in the Lean community as President of the Great Lakes Region for AME. Being a 22-year veteran of manufacturing, his role has extended across the entire manufacturing process to include enterprise excellence.*

Along with him is Bob Petruska, a well-known consultant and author of "Gemba Walks for Service Excellence." An international presenter, Bob, is best known for helping teams make business impacts fast. He has a way of transitioning from ideas to practice that are unlike anything else that I have seen. Bob has been on the podcast before, and I had the pleasure of working with him in creating a day-long conference for ASQ in Charlotte last year – "Strength Based Organizational Change."

I would like to welcome the both of you, and I guess not to slight Bob at all but Mick, can you jump to the chase and give me the elevator speech about Sur-Seal and where they came from and maybe where they are going?

Mick Wilz: *Yeah, thanks Joe. This is Mick Wilz from Cincinnati Ohio. Sur-Seal is a family-*

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owned business that was started in 1965. We'll be 50 years old in two more years. To get started, my father was head of the accounting department for Xavier University. And in his graduate class one of the projects was to find a business that was profitable. Two of the students came up and said, "Mr. Wilz, we found a company," and it was making gaskets. It was an industry that was just developing. They studied it and found out the profits were pretty good. My father was impressed. After the class was over they said, "Would you like to go into business with us into this?" And he says, "I'm a very busy person." He worked at XU, and he was also Vice President of Blue Cross and Blue Shield at the time. He says, "I'll be a silent partner. You guys start the business, and I'll take care of all the books for you." So that's the story of how Sur-Seal got started. I remember that day very well. We were in Toronto, Canada. He was taking an IBM computer course in 1965. That's how ahead of the times he was. And we went out and got ice cream that night. He said we started a new business, and we went out and got ice cream.

Joe: *Well how old were you then?*

Mick: I was born in 1956, so I was nine years old.

Joe: *Was it the whole family? Was it a big family? Were you all pretty excited going out?*

Mick: Yeah. It was five of us. My brother, he is the President of Sur-Seal right now – Jim Wilz. He was a year and a half old. But the whole family went out, and he was the youngest.

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Joe: *There's had to be a lot of change within the gasket industry, do you make all kinds of gaskets or are you just making them for the automotive industry or all different types of industries?*

Mick: You're 100% correct. There were major, major changes just like in any other industry. And that's one of our secrets to success, is staying on top of that. But we started out just making gaskets. If you remember Cincinnati, it was the machine tool capital of the world back in the 60's. The LaBlonde and pump and valve companies and all the local companies down on Spring Grove Avenue if anybody knows that little area, we were just the gasket supplier for them. And as all that industry left Cincinnati through the 70's and 80's, we knew we had to refocus. So our focus now is on OEMs, and we focus on four markets – heating and air conditioning (HVAC), the lighting industry, which is totally being flipped upside down now because of LLDs. We work with medical and then we work with industrial accounts.

Joe: *Well that is quite a change. I mean that's a very impressive change. How did you go about change maybe before – we'll get to the Lean journey that you went upon – but how did you adapt and stay agile to all this change in this before Lean?*

Mick: Meeting the customer's demand. The customer would request certain quality procedures we had to take care of. Lean was driven by one of our customers. But the big one we followed was ISO. So we were ISO certified before a lot of other people and, so that was the standards that we followed leading us up to Lean.

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Joe: Okay. Well you know we're here to talk about your Lean journey, how did it start at Sur-Seal?

Mick: I'll step back just a little bit there. When I told this story before, my father was not involved with the day to day. Let's go to the late 70's and early 80's. My father was getting ready to retire from teaching and the insurance industry. For his retirement, the two other owners had to step out of the business due to health reasons, and that was unexpected to him. He got a business in 1980 that he knew very little about except for the financial parts of it. My brother hopped in and was onboard with him. But my father did not want all our eggs in one basket. So I was in other industries during the 80's. He brought us in one at a time from 1980, and I finally came in 1991. During that time, I was putting restroom partitions in the bathrooms but I'm a person that really absorbs things.

During the 80's, there was a major boom on manufacturing around the Cincinnati Tri-state area. When I was putting restrooms in, I was in every factory in Cincinnati. So I would go and put these restroom partitions in, and I knew what Sur-Seal was doing. I was doing the maintenance for them. I was intrigued and I had all this information. I was in and out of every plant in Cincinnati. We moved our location, and after, we moved our location I took over production at Sur-Seal in 1992.

Joe: How did you become acquainted with Lean and what kind of drove that process there?

Mick: It was Carrier Corporation, our largest customer in Indianapolis. At one time, they saturated the market with the gas furnaces. I still think they're the largest – not for sure –

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but I think they're one of the largest gas furnace producers in the country. We were ISO certified with them and insisted that we become Lean. The way they did that back in them days was bring their suppliers in to help them improve their facility. I went to Indianapolis for a three day very intensive lean exercise. But it was rebuilding one of their furnace lines. We were out on the floor moving the equipment around.

Joe: *Carrier had to be a large percentage of your business to become a driving platform. Was it not or am I misinterpreting that?*

Mick: No that was our driving platform.

Joe: *How did as a manager did you get buy-in back at your company, especially when it was from the outside in driven? That's interesting to me.*

Mick: I did not get buy in. When I went to Carrier, the way they taught it, and everybody's changed, but in the 90's it was still the leadership your way or the highway type way. You put the improvements in, but you really didn't get buy-in from the people. I went back in, and I converted our entire shop to a Lean shop and 100% of my initiatives failed.

Joe: *And you attribute that to the lack of buy-in I would assume, right?*

Mick: Yeah, to the lack of buy-in.

Joe: *It's turned around. How did you do that?*

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Mick: It took me a while but in about 2000, 2001, my father was finally stepping out of the business and me and my two brothers stepped up and we took over the business. I stopped and took a hard look. I was not happy with what I was doing. I was living two different lives. At work, I was living my inherited life and at home I was living my created life. And I looked at my inherited life, and I didn't like how it was going, so I went through a lot of thought processes and I looked over my shoulder and I had nobody following me and I said, "What did I do wrong?" So I worked on personal development and came up with a plan.

Joe: *When you introduced Lean to the corporation, what was the turning point for you that made you look at Lean as something that could make a difference for you and then make a difference for the organization?*

Mick: In my travels doing manufacturing plants – and I'm not kidding, I was in 80 or 90 different plants at a time – I saw that things were being done differently than what we were doing. And one that I did not bring up in 1963 and I struggled with it all my life and still struggle with it today, I'm dyslexic. I went back and actually had myself retested. Got out of high school and couldn't read but when I was 14 years old I was putting brakes on the Teacher's Ed cars. So I knew I had strengths and knowledge that other people didn't have. But when I went back and retested myself, I am off the chart visual person, and that's how I learn. And I wanted to make our factory a visual factory. So that's the introductory of Lean. We didn't follow the standard Lean practices of Toyota or anything. We used what was common sense for us. And I saw employees come into our facilities also

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that couldn't read, and the simple mistakes were all visual. With ISO most of our mistakes were visual mistakes, so I turned our plant into a visual manufacturing facility.

Joe: *Well I've always remembered one saying in my early part of my lean career that said, "If you're not visual, you're not lean." So you're resonating with me with what you're saying there Mick.*

Mick: I went back and had myself retested by the Amman Institute down in Lexington. And the average person is less than 10% visual. I'm over 80% visual, so I'm off the chart.

Joe: *Most change efforts are made with an initial small group that you get, and you gather the buy-in around and make certain they're passionate about that subject. Were you able to surround yourself with a small group to drive that change or were you kind of a lone wolf for a while?*

Mick: I was a lone wolf for a while, but I failed so much that I was not going to take the next step until I had complete approval from the executive team. And I told you I found my issue in the 2000s, and I may step back and tell you what I found out there. But during 2001 to 2008 the economy was moving so fast, and the money was running in, new customers were coming in, and our company was kind of stale at the time but we were running on the energy of the big economic train that was moving. So we did not do many improvements during the first part of 2000 to 2004. But what changed it was I got the buy-in when the economy started slowing down. We developed a strategic plan. And out of

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that strategic plan the entire planning team said, "Mick we want you to build an engaged team, and we want you to build a world class manufacturing plant." So I did not move forward until I had the buy-in from the entire team.

Joe: *So was that would you say the real turning point for your organization?*

Mick: Yeah, that's the turning point. But before that I had to turn myself around first, so I was ready for it. I turned myself around. I took a look at myself and said, "I gotta change."

Joe: *Well one of your quotes and one of the things that of course you're talking about right here – but one of your quotes that I thought was great is "My interest is to take tribal knowledge and make it visual and accessible to everyone." That says a lot and it's easy to say, but it's pretty hard to do. How did you do it?*

Mick: The tribal knowledge if you start adding up the experience you have with some of your senior people – I have 20 years; my brother has 20 years, and 20 other people have 20 years – instantly you're into 500 years of knowledge that you're just losing when somebody walks out the door. I started putting all my information unto visual posters. If I would go to an event off site with AME or Shingeo or something, if I'd take an engagement class, I would make a poster out of it. If I would take a 5S class, I would make a poster out of it. Now our building is just a collection of all this tribal knowledge that has been collected. I have over 100 of these posters within the facility now.

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Joe: *Can you have too many? I mean does it at some point in time just become wallpaper?*

Mick: It doesn't become wallpaper; it becomes visual clutter. That's the term – visual clutter. Yeah, you have to be really cautious. Just like anything in Lean or anything in life, if you're not using it, move it on. But we can re-access it if we need it. But I'm very cautious about visual clutter.

Joe: *I can imagine from ISO you're sitting there with a lot of diagrams and things. But how does visual help in creating let's say maybe the bigger picture, the vision, the culture and things like that? How does that relate to that? I can see how it relates to standard work, but how does it relate to that bigger picture?*

Mick: It becomes a way of life, and if you go up to an intersection and they got green and red lights, everybody knows what it means. You got to make your facility something that everybody understands. And back in the 90's or in every other industry, when you brought in a new employee and "Oh, we're behind and we gotta have new employees," you brought them in and you stuck them out to the wolves, and they may not have ever figured out what was going on. Visual – probably the biggest thing that we see it helps is the power to bring new people up to a higher level almost immediately. We start with the orientation. And the orientation reviews all these posters, so they know where our journey started and then they go right into a visual workplace.

Joe: *One of the things that are mentioned that I've seen is the Lego game you created. Was that just a trivial exercise and something that you wanted to do? How did that work in*

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the picture of the company?

Mick: It's not a Lego game. It's a Lego model. During the rebuilding of my personal life, of my inherited life, I took a 360. Everybody knows what a 360 is where people can make comments about you and you hope most of them are positive, but some of them come back negative. They can be ugly if you don't have them right. But I had a coach along with me that was- most people hate taking 360s. This coach helped me through the process and said, "Mick, let's look at all the positive stuff they said." And one of the statement was "Mick is a great guy; he's an outward thinker. That's what we need. But he doesn't know how to bring his ideas back to home base for everybody to understand." And part of that were the posters. So I collected my information and put it on posters. But the other one was I'm able to see way out into the future what an organization needs. And I knew that we had to transform our shop from a job shop to a sell your manufacturing. But I couldn't even sell the leadership team on this. I mean it was just flipping our entire place upside down to build flow. I started building a Lego model and believe me they thought the owner totally lost it this time around. But I brought all my children's Legos in, and we started. After probably two weeks of everybody looking at me, they finally started seeing the value in it. And what we did was I built the current state, and I brought all the teams up and we built the future state. And the quote that came out of that, "People are not afraid of change, they're afraid of uncertainty." With this Lego model, it took the uncertainty out. I once taught a class that says Legos help build engagement. This tool I used with this Lego, it's a working model today. Somebody else takes care of it. We're changing it day after day. It just changed our culture immediately. Everybody was able to understand the Legos and understand my vision. New York Times actually picked up the story, and my Lego story

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has gone worldwide.

Joe: And I compliment you on one thing you said there is you built the current state first because I've been using this saying over and over again lately which is "It's easier to predict the future than it is the present." And everybody has a tendency to want to correct things without really understanding the present, and I compliment you highly there because I think that is so important rather than just jumping into this as what we should do.

Mick: And what I heard you say is to predict the future. Nobody can predict the future. Steve Jobs has a great quote "You can only connect the dots going in your past. The future you have to trust that the dots are going to connect." I really like that because you're either building or diminishing engagement. You never have true engagement. But engagement is built on trust and moving into the future it's a very trying time. You got to have the trust of the people behind you, and if everybody is working together you'll meet your goals. But if you don't have an organization that is built on a foundation of trust, I'd say hold on; you're going to have a rough ride coming up in front of you.

Joe: I think that's a great place here for me to shift gears. Great statements Mick. Bob I've isolated you from this conversation; one because I may make it a two part, but two because I really would like some insight on what Mick had to say for the viewers. You're one of the best change agents I know. What is different about what Mick did that others don't do?

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Bob Petruska: What I see Mick doing is he's engaging people on a visceral level. He's engaging them in a way that allows them to become part of the construction of the future. We think of it as building a bridge. We're building a bridge across a sea of uncertainty, and we're walking on the bridge that we're building on as we go because we don't know what's in the future. There are so many uncertainties out there. I love that Mick has identified that people are really afraid of uncertainty. By recognizing this, he's found a brilliant way, a solution to overcome people's uncertainty in a couple different ways. Number one, he allows them to use their hands to be part of it, and adults learn by doing. They don't learn by going to a course or a conference. You learn by applying yourself. He's having people apply themselves immediately to the task at hand which is constructing together a better future. They get to work it out ahead of time – "Will this work? What will be the tradeoff of us moving this piece of equipment from here to there in that flow?" I think it's brilliant.

The other thing is people want to be part of something. One of his quotes that I really love is that you got to have a seat on the bus for everyone. What it means to me when he says that is that we all have something valuable to contribute. When you think about there's differences in the way people think, there's value in those differences. Servicing the intricacies of the different ways of thinking actually ends up with a better solution than if everyone just kind of nods their heads, "Oh yeah, yeah, go ahead and do that," but then silently don't really buy-in and then later come out and actually try to destroy and say, "You know I told them this wasn't going to work." Instead, he asks people, "Tell me what to do." So he's showing humility, and he's showing respect for the people and he's respecting the people who know the job best. That's really for me it's all about respect for

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people, and that builds a trusting environment where I think people can be fully utilized. He's doing a lot of things that I really admire.

Joe: *One of things I think about you of course is the Gemba Walks, and you take in, let's say you'd be a great museum guide. How would you prepare for a walk at Sur-Seal?*

Bob: Of course Mick does what he calls parades. They have a parade route and it isn't Mick doing it; it's his people doing it. And that's what I like. So I would want to work or be close to the people there and try to learn from them. Of course whenever we do a Gemba Walk it's eyes wide open, right? And ideally I love to work backwards from the point where you're closest to the customer and work your ways backwards to the suppliers. In doing so you really get a better sense and feel of the customer-supplier relationships. And sometimes there are things that even the leaders in the organization are not even aware of when you go in the reverse order. And it's these Aha moments where real learning happens. So for me I would do that. The second is I'm not sure I would want to stay on the parade route. I would want to deviate. I would get interested and want to go over into this corner and see what they're doing here. Of course, I'd want to look at what people are proud of, and I would want to encourage them and provide an audience, an ear for those people that they could share what it is that they're proud of. In doing so it increases the buy-in and ownership in the organization, and I get a chance to learn from them.

Joe: *One of the things you said very interesting and I can use an analogy that most people don't do is when you play golf I was always instructed that you should really walk a golf*

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course backwards to understand it. It really sheds a different light on it. That's what you're saying; it's walking backwards.

Bob: Right. On the golf course, I can imagine there's a very practical thing because you don't know what's over the hill. Is that a rough spot or is that the green. Where are the trees and so on? So I've never heard the golf analogy. But yeah, working your way backwards is really kind of fundamentally counterintuitive. It goes against what you'll normally get when you go on a "tour". But I think it really is a way for people to express and understanding a deeper understanding of the system of work that provides value to those customers.

Joe: *We talk about being able to increase the rate of change and we talk about needing that burning platform to do it. From your viewpoint as a consultant, how do you know when the platform is hot enough? How do you know when to make it hotter? When do you know that you need to still add some more fuel?*

Bob: That's a challenging question to answer. I think you don't want people running around like their hair is on fire if there is no real good business purpose for it. We don't change for the sake of changing. I think we learned a big lesson in the 2008 timeframe when the commodity market got really out of control. And that was many organizations scrapped their strategic plans. What purpose is there in a five year strategic plan if you can't tell what the commodity prices for your raw materials are going to be in a week? So they had to shorten that planning interval and start looking at things maybe weekly and say, "What's our strategy for next week when you have high uncertainty in the

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environment?" So I think it's situation dependent. But what I like to do with organizations and my clients is I like for the senior leaders to tell me where it is that their pain points are, and that's our starting point. And then I help them to be able to articulate that pain point in a way that people can understand from a global perspective. And when you can look at it from the business side and articulate the value proposition for change, that's when people start getting onboard. It's like I've got to sell you on the problem, not the solution. So as a senior leader, your job is to sell the problem and the people who are working in the area to make those changes and improvements. It's their job to tell you the how. You don't want the senior leaders getting into the tactical "how are you going to implement these changes" to me or strategic objectives. In fact, all you want them to do is point you in the direction and then sort of give you that sense of urgency by communicating the alternative. So I like to say, "What's the alternative of us not changing? What's the worst case that can happen if we don't change?" And then if you hear those things then you have an answer.

Joe: *I know you do a lot of strength-based work, how is that applied in Sur-Seal? Where are the strength-based points that you saw in what Mick said?*

Bob: Another challenging question. I look at pretty much everything that Mick does is strength-based. He's not focusing on the deficit. He's focusing on a future, a positive future that people can change. And by allowing people to make decisions on the floor, on the battlefield so to speak, he's allowing people to learn. Too often in organizations we don't let people make decisions. We say you know what, we're the boss. We're going to make all the decisions. But then guess what; you own the outcomes whereas I think what Mick is

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doing are something slightly different. He's saying, "I don't know all the answers. Why don't you tell us what it is that we need to do?" And as I've talked to him and as I've learned from him, and you can watch the video on his website sur-seal.com. You can watch the people that work at Mick's factory, and they'll tell it to you in their own words. And it's just amazing to watch because there's such a pride. There's one gal there that says, "I was part of that." They're just so proud of the fact that they got to work on the future. And the model, the Legos model, is a brilliant way to allow people to have the time to absorb it and for them to buy into the whole idea of the change and use it in a way that speaks to their strengths.

Joe: *We're all looking for this cookie-cutter approach that we just take, and we put it into ours and everything works and we know that doesn't work. What are some of the obstacles if you try to mimic the Sur-Seal approach that you would find in other organizations?*

Bob: If you tried to mimic the approach as far as opticals goes, I think that the posters would be something that I would look for. I love the idea of as people go out to a seminar or conference that they come back with something. How often do we invest thousands of dollars into people's development and we ask them, "Hey, what did you learn of it?" "It was a good conference." "What did you bring back?" "Uh, I've got a book on my shelf." And that's about as far as it goes, right? But I think what Mick does by the example in the optical would be creating a one page poster out of it. I do this myself. I learned from an organization called OD on the Edge. It was the six brain networks. What I learned is that by putting it on one page, by boiling down something complex such as an hour or so long presentation and boiling it to its essence of one page, the golden nuggets, it's something I

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can refer back to myself. I don't have to have the whole book; I just have it on one page. The way I do them I call them placemats because for me I think we've been PowerPointed to death. The placemat is a one page boiled down version of an entire book or an entire presentation. What I think Mick is doing with these posters is very similar, it's a boiled down version of what he learned. It's the key points, and it's done in a visual way so that when people have a chance to look at it as he's described today, during the orientations, that they get a chance to really absorb it and learn. And I love the fact that it's visual.

Joe: *I think you've done a wonderful job with the placemats because working with you I've seen the different ways they've been developed. What a great takeaway because it's practically in the implementation path for someone to enact your work and whatever you talk about during a subject or an engagement. I wanted to throw that out and compliment you. I have to give you a plug for your book because you got placemats included on a CD, don't you?*

Bob: Yeah, I sure do Joe. Thank you very much. The placemats are meant to be a journey, a guided tour so to speak of the service excellence, the Gemba Walks for Service Excellence book, and they start with building your team. It's basically designed for that team leader or manager to guide their team through, so it makes that person the expert automatically. And as you pass those out to your team, it's very step by step instructions. "Here's what you do to get them to understand what the current situation is" for example. "Here's a tool called infinity diagram. Here's how you use it." It's all on one page. So it's kind of bite size chunks. I think that you also when we co-facilitated at last year's spring conference, you used the placemats in many of the things that you did for your breakout

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sessions, and I think people remember that for a good long time. And we had a lot of great feedback from people who really appreciated not being given death by PowerPoint and given an opportunity to really understand a tool, or a process, or a system much deeper.

Joe: Well I think what's really key for both what you and also what Mick is doing is that you're creating these visual tools let's say, but you're leaving the room for people to interpret them and put their own information in them, which is what makes them work. They're not a checklist.

Bob: Correct. You want people to engage with it and understand it. And when we look at the placemat we use a process to have a conversation. I think that's what's missing. You need to have a focused conversation that unlocks the wisdom in the room. And so we talk about respect for people. I do a lot of presentations. I did one just last week. When I do my presentations, the very first thing I'm thinking of, there are 40 people in the room and the IQ in the room is so much greater than what I can bring. So the very first thing I'm thinking is how can I engage or unlock the wisdom in the room and learn from the people because I stand to learn as much or more from them than they will from me. So the placemat allows that interaction between the presenter and the audience in a way that opens the dialog so that it's not just a monolog where somebody goes through their PowerPoints and then there's five minutes left at the end for the questions. Of course, they run out of time and say, "Well you know I only got ten more slides to go and we're not going to have time for questions today." You know how many times we've heard that. I want to prevent all that.

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I want to respect the wisdom in the room. More than respect the wisdom in the room, I want to surface it. And I think that's another thing that Mick is doing by basically giving people the autonomy. Now he's accomplished more in his life by far than I have, and that's why I respect him as much as I do, and I admire what he's done. Anybody who's turned a situation around from the 1990s way of thinking to where he's achieved with what I understand his organization has done, I'm just fascinated by it, and I want to learn from it. I want to capture as much as I can from that.

Joe: *And I think the change that has occurred over 50 years is pretty outstanding. Now both of you are going to be in Charlotte for this year's spring conference on April 8, the ASQ Spring Conference. Bob, is there a theme for this year's conference?*

Bob: I'll let Mick explain it to you. It's called Keep Your Organization Chain Straight. So Mick if you don't mind, please chime in here. Where did the chain come from, please?

Mick: Chain was a simple way to describe where our organization was, and many other organizations are. But if you take a pile of chain and everything is just in one big pile, that's chaos, nobody knows where it's going. I pull the chain up and straighten it up one link at a time, and I find a link on the chain for every process. I feel as a leader, and I'm real big on "you don't manage process and you lead change." As a leader, my job is to keep the chain straight. It may get out of whack, and I just have to realign it, but as a leader my job is to keep the chain straight. I don't want to pull it because people will fall off, and I don't want to push it because it will pile up again. So my job now is just to keep

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the chain straight.

Joe: *What are you hoping to accomplish at the conference this year?*

Mick: Like Bob said, I want to learn as much as I can and I want to spread as much knowledge as I can. I can't bring my entire Lego model, but 75% of my Lego model will be in Charlotte at the event and I will bring several posters.

Joe: *And Bob what are you looking for and tell me a little bit more about the conference and fill in the details there for me.*

Bob: Sure, I'd be glad to. Well you know we divided it up and Roger Addison's model – it's the four W model. And he said basically when you look at any process, or system, there's really only four W's. It's the worker, the work, the workplace, and the world. And so we divided the conference up with those four W's in mind. And we said we're really after this understanding, this idea and notion of respect for people. So we start with this notion of respecting people, and we have these breakouts. So for every one of these W's we have a break up. So we have a brief keynote speech and what we're looking to accomplish is learning more about how do you really improve because it's about continuous improvement in these four areas. We have really cool things when we get into the work. Mick has something called The Rattlesnake Hunt, which is extremely interesting, and I really love the idea of it. And we'll of course do visual management, cause mapping, elimination of waste. We're going to get into risk control. Of course in the workplace we'll get into change

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leadership, understanding the internal customer using metrics and of course the Legos model to understand the flow. So people will be able to choose from those breakouts. And then when we get to the world we're going to talk about what's coming next. Are we just painting over our old world, bridging generational differences? And there are collaboration tools. I'm bringing Dana Sednek who's a good friend of mine from Colorado, and she's one of the best at this online collaboration. How do you have an online meeting where people are fully engaged, and you have a success at the end of the meeting? So it's going to be a great conference, and it is very participant driven. We have seven of us conveners, and some will give keynote speeches. We're bringing in Kevin Divine from Hunoval Law. His company was just written up nationally in the AVA for being one of the first law firms to implement Lean Six Sigma. So it's going to be kind of interesting there. So we're really looking forward to this.

Joe: *It sounds pretty exciting. It sounds like you're having a great agenda. Mick what's the best way for someone to contact you and learn more about what you're doing?*

Mick: You can visit our website sur-seal.com. Send me an email. The best way to get in contact with me is to come visit us. Our plant is open for tours. Like Bob said, we learn so much from the people coming in as we do giving the tours. So our plant is open as a learning facility. Direct competition may not be allowed but anybody else. We got people coming from around the world to see our processes. Call me and setup a tour.

Bob: And speaking of that just so we know, we showed the video from Mick's website at the last Continuous Improvement Consortium meeting in Charlotte and a contingent of

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people could not make the spring conference from a local food manufacturer, and they decided to send a number of people out to see Mick's facility. So that's what gave us the idea to really bring Mick into the spring conference because as soon as people saw what he was doing with the Legos model and what his people were doing, there was an immediate interest in this to learn more. And I think they're coming your way later this month, right Mick?

Mick: Next Thursday.

Joe: *What's the best way for someone to contact you Bob?*

Bob: My name is Bob Petruska, and my website is at bobpetruska.com. So you can catch me there. My email is bob@bobpetruska.com. I'm on LinkedIn. My phone number is listed there, as well. So anyone who's interested to learn more from me please feel free to contact me. Thank you very much.

Joe: *I would like to thank the both of you very much. I thought it was a very enlightening conversation. I wish you the best at the conference. This podcast will be available on the Business901 iTunes store and the Business901 blog site. So thanks Bob and Mick.*

Bob: Thank you Joe.

Mick: Thank you very much.

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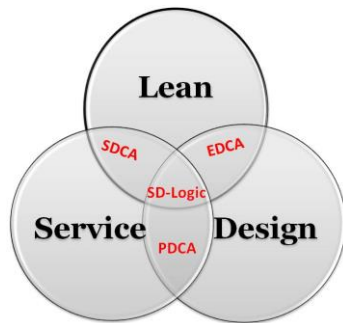
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