



Continued...

[Is Operational Excellence Worth the Squeeze?](#)

[Unleashing Huge Gains Through Effective Product Development](#)

Is Operational Excellence Worth the Squeeze?



Unfortunately culture is not changed by constant change. The only culture that sticks with constant change is “how to cope with constant change”. The question then, is whether we should have jumped on the bandwagon which drove significant change by introducing new terms and tools.

Lean is a great approach, since most of it was learned by the Japanese from the Americans and translated to Japanese for their people to understand and apply to their situation. These tools were developed by American and European industrial engineers. The Japanese used the tools diligently and also connected them into a good system. Unfortunately, the same tools were brought back from Japan with Japanese terms without the well-connected system. This led to reinventing the wheel and starting from almost zero-base.

One may wonder why this went unnoticed for so long or whether it is actually true. Here are some of the points that were raised at the discussion panels of industrialists and academicians at the IIE annual conference in 2012:

- ◇ Introducing Japanese terms, many of them without a clear understanding of their actual use, made it difficult to correlate to the original tools and systems in use.
- ◇ Because of none or minimal involvement of engineers and industrial engineers in the transformation, there was no previous knowledge to which to compare.

The Japanese definitely used the tools better than we had. However, Taiichi Ono, the father of Toyota Production System, stated that if Ford had continued the way they were going, they would have done the same things or better. Unfortunately, instead of us taking it to the next step through continuous improvement, we started from zero base with the same tools using new Japanese terms.

This set America back drastically. Some of the companies that implemented the new tools and won many of the prestigious awards incurred significant losses and even filed for bankruptcy protection.

Hence, the question — is operational excellence worth the squeeze? The answer is — it depends. It is definitely worth the squeeze if it is applied like the Japanese did — using the language of the people and integrating it with your own system, without taking two steps back to go one step forward.

Key Links

[OpEx Solutions Website](#)

[CenTex OpEx Consortium](#)

[Consortium Event Schedule](#)

[Training Schedule](#)

Unleashing Huge Gains Through Effective Product Development

For business leader needs, OpEx Solutions offers a two-day leadership seminar on Product Development Process Excellence (PDP). For the overloaded practitioners, OpEx Solutions has compressed the tactical part of PDP to a series of five, 90-minute webinar modules, offered one module per month during lunch time. The five modules are:

- ◇ Module 1: Preliminary Assessment and Requirements
- ◇ Module 2: Product Development Planning
- ◇ Module 3: Product and Process Design
- ◇ Module 4: Product and Process Validation and Launch
- ◇ Module 5: Sustaining Engineering

