



Stories from My Sensei: Two Decades of Lessons Learned Implementing Toyota-Style Systems

Steve Hoefft

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In the tradition of Taoist philosophers and Zen masters, Steve Hoefft tells the stories he learned from his Toyota Production System (TPS) master teachers. Sometimes enigmatic, sometimes funny, but always powerful and enlightening, these stories of continuous improvement and Lean implementation are organized around the Toyota House framework. After covering historical and foundational aspects of TPS, the stories go on to illustrate a wealth of essential topics encompassing the timeless, unchanging principles of Just-In-Time, Built in Quality, and Respect for People, and delves into specifics on many tools like kanban, Quick Changeover, and A3 Problem Solving.

Winner of a 2011 Shingo Research and Professional Publication Award

More than entertainment, the telling of stories is a way that human wisdom is handed from one generation to the next. It is a gentle but memorable way to learn the lessons of failure without suffering the personal pain of misdirected efforts; a way to find the best path without having to personally experience hundreds of dead-end journeys. It is a way to gain understanding that goes deeper than definitions.

When Steve writes about the TPS house, it is not just an abstraction. It is something he lives. He can vividly picture it in every operation.... Steve's stories...bring the house to life.
-Jeffrey K. Liker, Shingo Prize-winning author of *The Toyota Way*

TPS is more than just a manufacturing blueprint and a set of business rules. It is a tradition, a learned and shared cultural legacy that imbues each ensuing generation with ethics and a sense of purpose that goes far beyond the punching of a clock and the filling of a ledger. It is far better taught by stories than by rulebooks. Ideal for individual learning and reflection as well as for use with groups, Stories From My Sensei provides key insights into how and how-not-to implement TPS principles. Reflection questions accompany each story to help readers apply the lessons to their own situations—situations that will ultimately become the basis of stories handed down to the next generation.

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