

# RETHINKING LEAN: WHAT IF WE TAUGHT LEAN TO CUSTOMERS?

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## THE PARADOX

- We teach lean to employees, managers and leaders
- *But customers, we trick*
- What if we made **customers "aware" partners** in the lean system?



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## WHY CUSTOMER LEAN MATTERS

Service operations are  
77% of the economy

In services, customers do  
part of the work

What if customer work  
improved by 15%? Huge  
impact on GDP! *[and your  
company???)*

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## UNLEASHING UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

- Customers determine value but often can't communicate it well
- We hide waste, problems and improvement from customers
- The 9th muda: *Wasted customer knowledge and creativity*



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## FROM PASSIVE TO ACTIVE LEAN

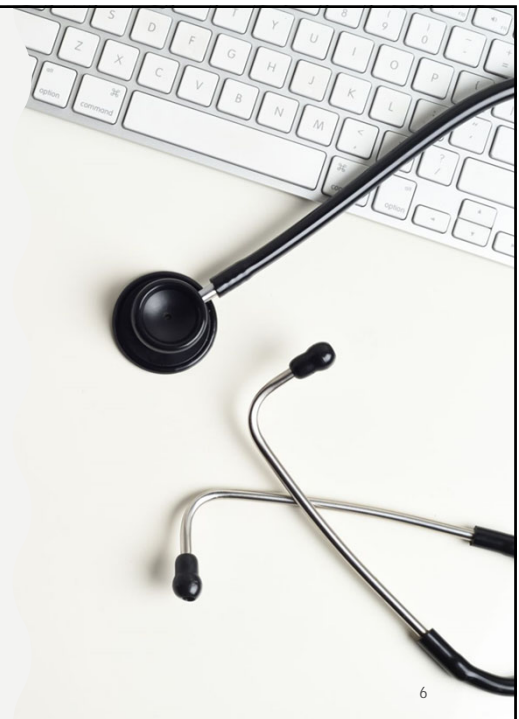
- Provide customers tools to identify waste and problems
- Make customers part of problem-solving and improvement
- Share process maps so customers understand their role



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## CUSTOMER LEAN STORIES

- Whole Foods: customers help clean, improving throughput
- Hospitals: patients identify safety improvement opportunities
- Home exchange: renters suggest improvements for owners
- Lean classes: students learn lean by practicing lean



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# IMPLEMENTING CUSTOMER LEAN

01

Cross-train customers on processes so they can improve

02

Provide simple instructions on lean interactions at point of use

03

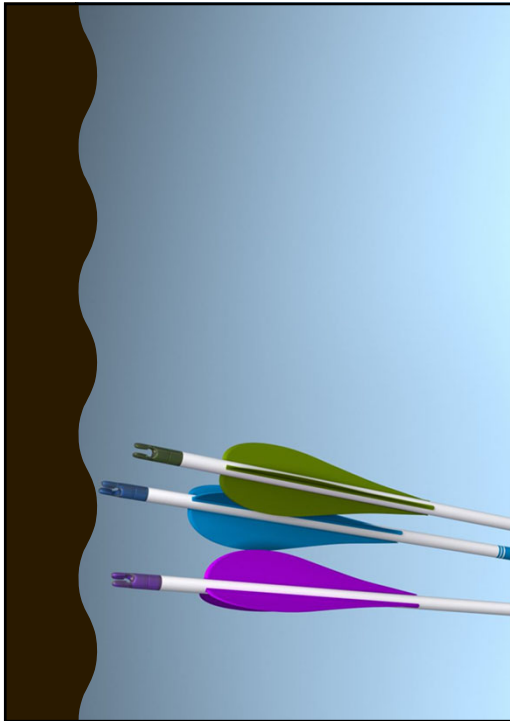
Enable customers to help each other, be a connector

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## ENGAGING CUSTOMERS IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Ask for improvement ideas, make feedback mechanisms easy
- Share improvement success stories to motivate more engagement
- Recognize customers who contribute to improvements

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## CUSTOMER LEAN MINDSET SHIFT

- From "do it for the customer" to *"do it with the customer"*
- Customers as partners, not just recipients
- Respect and unleash customer knowledge and creativity

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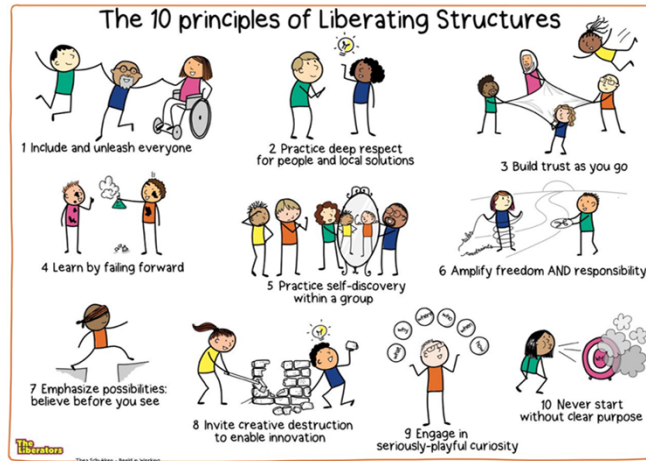


## ENVISIONING A CUSTOMER LEAN FUTURE


- Swim pools: customers share lanes to solve capacity issues
- Airports: passengers use lean to speed up boarding
- Everywhere: customers driving improvement and innovation
- Closing message: **Ready to make your customers lean partners? *Let's do this!***

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# LIBERATING LEAN



# 1-2-4-ALL


Agenda Item	Goals	Approach	Rationale	Steps/Timing	Facilitator Notes
Questions and challenges	Clarify thinking across the audience. Capture questions and challenges to the concept. Get issues on the table.	1 - 2 - 4 - ALL 	Brainstorm and vet the ideas in the room with everyone participating. Find out what people want to talk about. People feel heard.	-Alone: 1 -Pairs: 2 -Pair of pairs: 4 -ALL: 8 <b>15 mins total</b>	Use timer and chime (or cowbell).

Invitation:

- *What good questions should we be asking? What are your reactions to "customer lean"?*

<http://www.liberatingstructures.com/1-1-2-4-all/>

# MIN SPECS


Agenda Item	Goals	Approach	Rationale	Steps/Timing	Facilitator Notes
<b>What are the minimum requirements for customer lean to be effective?</b>	Specify only the absolute "Must dos" and "Must not dos" for achieving a purpose.  Create a baseline specification.	Min Specs 	By specifying only the min number of simple rules, that must be respected, we unleash a group to innovate freely.  Eliminate clutter of nonessential rules that get in the way of innovation.	<u>Part 1</u> -Alone: 1 -Group: 4 <u>Part 2</u> -Group: 6 -All compare and consolidate: 8  <b>20 mins total</b>	Start with the maximum possible list.  Be critical during the test.  This describes the Future State. The Problem is the gap.

Invitation:

- *Part 1: What are all the things we need to do to make sure that customer lean is effective?*
- *Part 2: If we didn't do each of these things, would we still succeed?*

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# 15% SOLUTION

Agenda Item	Goals	Approach	Rationale	Steps/Timing	Facilitator Notes
<b>Committing</b>	Make private and public commits to improve accountability and achieve early results.	15% Solution 	Discover and Focus on What Each Person Has the Freedom and Resources to Do Now	Alone: 2 Public commitment volunteers: 5  <b>10 mins total</b>	Capture commitments on flipchart

Invitation:

- *"What is your 15 percent? Where do you have discretion and freedom to act? What can you do without more resources or authority?"*

<http://www.liberatingstructures.com/7-15-solutions/>

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## LET'S CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION: "WHAT IF WE.....???"

- Created users group or community of practice?
- Made this a Lean Coffee?
- Offer help getting started?
- Create a design team?
- Run some experiments?
- Tackled the Min Specs?
- Followed up on 15% Solutions?

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More lean conversations: *Book a 30-minute Zoom call to talk about lean (or anything).* [click here](#)  
*Customer Lean*

