



It's hard to believe we're already through January; seems like we were in Pasadena for the Congress just last week. It's time to look forward and we have lots to look forward to. I'm particularly interested in the Design Forum we're co-sponsoring with P2SL and the AIA. This is always an interesting time in Berkeley—some of my best experiences in lean design have taken place in the beautiful Garden Room at the Clark Kerr Campus at Cal. We were over-Wellmaned (bad pun) last year by Joan Wellman's inspirational message. And David Mar and Laura Lesniewski have combined with Markku Allison and Iris Tommelein to produce another fascinating program. The agenda was laid out in this space last week—it is bold and ambitious. It incorporates an idea we started in Milwaukee last June as to “what is lean design?”

Speaking of lean design, we have been working on securing more of participation from our Design Corporate Members and driving to increase that membership. The discussion around lean design is completely separate from the discussion around design participation in IPD. Common threads help connect each to the other but they are not mutually dependent on one another—although it is hard to imagine an IPD project where the designers did not use lean tools like Target Value Design and Set Based Design as the heart of their processes. We encourage the Communities of Practice to have design discussions in their meetings—invite designers to present on their use of lean techniques—both in terms of successes and challenges. I'm hoping each CoP will have a representative at the Lean Design Forum to take back to your communities the ideas and challenges we'll develop there.

Once again, we're asking the Communities of Practice to continue to carry our message for us. They have actually taken up the challenge. Last week, a self-starting committee of folks in Birmingham, Alabama met to form a core group to develop that community. Thanks especially to John Gill and Ashley Colburn for spearheading that charge. The Atlanta Community of Practice is developing and Greg recently spoke in Florida to the CoP that meets in Orlando.

I'm reminding the CoPs of our challenge to make May our month for metrics. We'd love to see CoPs develop programs around what metrics are being captured by members and others in the lean community. What numbers are important? Are we consistently seeing time savings on projects? And from what point? Programming? Redesign? Bidding? Are contractors on bid jobs being required to reduce schedule to get jobs? Reduce fee?

Are trades seeing substantial pay back from the Last Planner®? On hard bid jobs, that's the place we would expect to see returns from efficient management of resources.

Are we reducing design time? Design costs? Are we increasing design efficiency?

In design assist, are we recognizing programming savings? On a recent job in Texas, \$700,000 in design assist fees dropped the target cost by \$5 million, almost 20% savings over the original cost of the program. What's happening on your projects?



Are owners seeing trades and contractors putting 100% at risk in IPD projects? How about modified IPD projects—IPD ish or IPD lite as our friends at AIA might define it? How are incentive plans being created? Monitored? Paid out?

Are we seeing any claims on jobs where lean tools have been implemented? What jobs/what tools? We hardly recognize that perhaps the most important part of predictable work flow on hard bid jobs is the lack of claims. Can we begin to track that?

Are we seeing burn out on projects? The government reports that the GNP is higher than it was before the recession but we have 6,000,000 fewer people in the workforce. Are we all working harder to make that happen? What lean tools are helping us ease that pain? If we can drive efficiency into our projects, we should be able to spend less time on the job and produce more. What's your story?

I discussed with an international architectural firm last week at a lunch and learn that many of the metrics we use are "soft" metrics. We know projects are better. We know morale is better. We know trade partners like to work on jobs where they are empowered to participate in schedule management. How do we capture that? Oral histories help us with that but what other reporting do we do to share those tales?

We're often asked for "documentable numbers." I know they are being developed out there but should there be consistent reporting of numbers beyond percent of plan complete on projects? I'd like the Communities of Practice to focus on that issue for May. Among the things I'm looking forward to include their reports on what they've found and what they've tried. Beyond that, what will they start doing? Let's see if we can have answers in time for the early summer Design Forum to be held in St. Louis this year on June 14 and 15.

Thanks for all you do. Bring 'em home safe.