



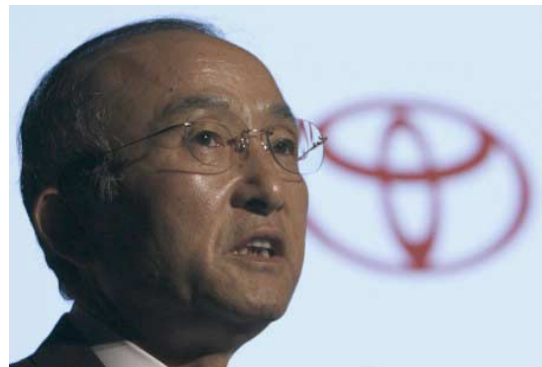
COMPANY CULTURE

Which of the following quotations comes from Toyota?

- "Here, we crunch people and spit them out."
- "The DNA of our company is to always challenge ourselves to do better."
- "We are Number 1 in many markets."
- "Let's learn to speak the same language."
- "Here we're afraid to show problems."

If you guessed the second one, you're right. The first comes from a company reputed to be a Lean champion. The third comes from a competitor of Toyota, the fourth from a metalworking company, and the fifth from a company which has had some success with Lean techniques but which obviously has not really implemented it.

The basic difference among these 5 companies is their culture. **The word culture means "the sum total of acquired regularities in the behavior of the members of a human society."** The President of Toyota, Katsuaki WATANABE, in speaking of the DNA of his company, was making specific reference to culture.



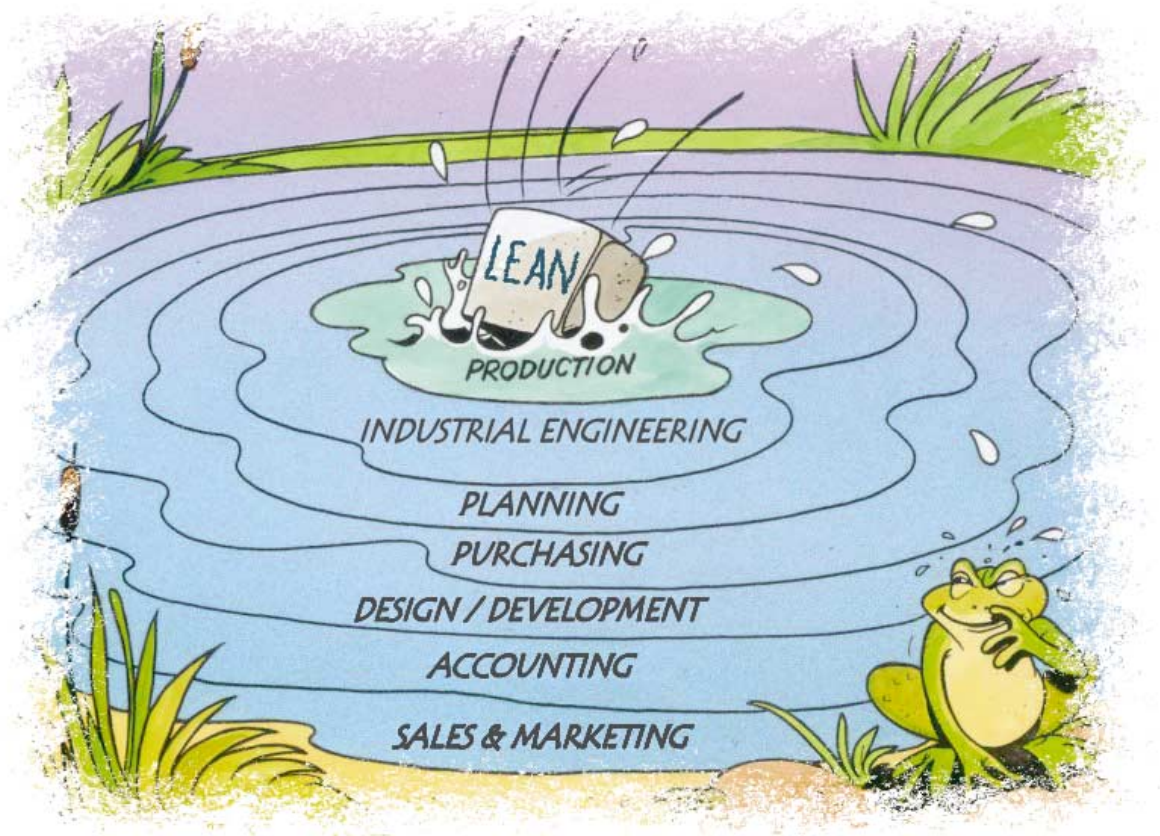
The characteristics of a "Lean" culture may be presented by opposing them to those of a pre-Lean culture:

Réf. : International Herald Tribune, February 12, 2008

TRADITIONAL CULTURE	LEAN CULTURE
Assumption of incompetence	Assumption of competence
Fix Faults	Fault Prevention
Check/Inspect	Right First Time
Controls/Directives	Guide/Focus
Enforce Rules	Empower
Authorizations	Objectives
Layers of Managers	Flat and Lean
Stifles Creativity	Working to limit of competence

Every company faces challenges: globalizing, innovating, increasing operating margins, acquiring know-how. Surmounting new challenges requires new behaviors, in short, changing the culture of the company. "We have to change the mind-set."

Changing the culture is like throwing a rock into the pond. It's doing something experimental, suspending the traditional way of doing things for individuals and groups in one part of the company.



Implementing Lean, for example, means pulling products instead of pushing work orders. That implies measuring productivity by group, by cell, instead of by individual. Someone from Industrial Engineering, from Purchasing, from Quality and from Information Technology is available to production operators and not the opposite.

In that way we create new behaviours; we change the company culture.