



Foreword by **Brent Allen**

Many companies have a full box of improvement tools—lean, six sigma, kanban, 5S, TPM, to name a few. When these are deployed, company leaders get results, often promising results. But these results are also often not sustained. The solution, they are told, is to make sure the effort is *operator-led*. But that goal often seems even more elusive.

A new business paradigm is required.

In her book, *Work That Makes Sense* (WTMS), Dr. Gwendolyn Galsworth provides such a paradigm when she shares her comprehensive methodology for implementing the visual workplace through operators—operator-led. First, operators are shown specific procedures for implementing workplace visuality in their own areas—from smart placement and the visual where, to mini-systems and the four power levels of visual devices. Great examples, great photographs, and systematic step-by-step methods show how. Galsworth teaches that “how” extremely well, providing chapter after chapter of the principles and techniques that operators need to drive out waste through visual solutions. This, the mechanics of visuality, is the first dimension of this excellent book.

The book’s second dimension is even more powerful: the cultural change and how leadership is widened to include operators. Galsworth does this better than I have seen anywhere else—in any book, program or methodology—positing a new business paradigm for us to consider. She calls that leadership paradigm: *I-driven*.

At the heart of I-driven leadership is the realization that operators do not know how to lead *because* they have not been given the opportunity to learn to do so.

Lifetime manufactures a wide range of innovative lifestyle products. Thanks to 1200 hardworking men and women, we are leader in several of those markets. After 30 years as an executive with this fine company, I am convinced that most supervisors would love to get their operators to take on more responsibility and make more decisions. Their question is how?

Managers and operators want the same thing. But how do we get it? I found the answer—one I had sought for a very long time—in Galsworth’s implementation framework. A successful continuous

improvement work culture must find the balance point between *structure* and *free will*.

This is at the heart of Galsworth's I-driven approach—her approach to visuality and her approach to creating a work culture for excellence. Her book clearly identifies what category of decisions operators can and cannot make. In the week-long WTMS training for trainers Galsworth led at Lifetime, I saw this in action when operators were presenting a list of visual improvement projects they had identified. She asked them to circle the ones they could do and the ones that were management's. They did, taking on many tasks as their own. I was taken aback. Prior to that, not only operators but managers would have listed **all of them** as management's job. I suddenly realized that the answer to the question who gets to lead is about giving operators permission, time, and authority to lead. To lead what? *To lead themselves*. Once given, operators willingly accept *and* meet that challenge.

The fact that Galsworth's approach has structure—shape, rules, and accountability—provides managers a way to contribute to continuous improvement and to excel. You need to retain structure so the place doesn't get blown up and to communicate an abiding respect for managers and their legitimate role. That same structure allows operators to freely determine *how* they want to fulfill their own need to contribute and excel—operator-led visuality. A spirited and engaged workforce is not about anti-management. It is about a system where both sides of the equation succeed. It is *not* either/or but *both*. This is a great definition of teamwork.

And yet a third element is needed and also found in this exceptional book—the one that gets added to teamwork so the enterprise can grow to a new horizon. That third element is *exactness*.

Work That Makes Sense teaches us that visual devices translate information into exact behavior. That is its primary purpose: embedding and sustaining exactness through visual solutions. And this can only come about in a culture of free will—an I-driven culture. The third element for enterprise excellence—for creating the continuous improvement work culture I have sought for Lifetime—is exactness: the exactness that visuality, and every other improvement method, requires for its success.

Exactness cannot be demanded. The level of exactness required for continuous improvement to become a way of life at a company can only be given voluntarily, through an act of free will.

Free will, structure, and exactness are a shifting balance point. This is the new business paradigm that Galsworth offers us. This is an I-driven enterprise. Once learned and operationalized, this paradigm allows the organization to take on anything, any new improvement effort.

I have been a student of management for 30 years, read countless management books and gone to many seminars. I have never found a better, more powerful system of transformation than Galsworth's. That comes through on every page of this book. She does that better than anybody.

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