



Foreword by **Rhonda Kovera**

Fifteen years ago, my partner, David Stearns, and I took a deep breath and made a bold move. We started a company, Visual Workplace Inc. (VWP), in order to provide products and services to companies wanting to go visual.

At the time, and like so many other companies, we made the early mistake of thinking that visual was the same as 5S. Then we figured it out.

Please don't get me wrong. 5S is a very important first step on every company's journey to enterprise excellence. But I worry when I search the internet for what's new in the visual workplace and the little I find is nearly always under 5S—everywhere. 5S is the first thing companies think of when we talk to them about visuality. And we find that many of them shy away from even using the word *visual workplace* because they think they are being redundant; they think it is the same as saying 5S.

That is why we are so delighted with Gwendolyn's new book, *Work That Makes Sense*. It doesn't just define what a visual workplace is, it shows you step by step by step how to transform your company into a visual work environment. It describes in detail tools, processes, and outcomes that are so far beyond what is understood as the visual approach by most people that I feel sure that anyone who reads this book will never confuse 5S and visual again. They will know that *workplace visuality* (Gwendolyn's term) will build your safety, quality, and on-time delivery specifications in the work environment, that visual devices will let you spot abnormalities at a glance, that visual solutions will build standard work and your KPIs into daily operations, and much much more.

Work That Makes Sense represents an opportunity for all organizations, not just manufacturing, to apply some extraordinary concepts to their workplaces—service professions, education, health care. The tools and concepts in this book provide operators, the experts, with concrete ways to improve their own workplace in a way they can and want to be responsible for. Whether you are an operator, nurse, mechanic or teacher, the common sense practices in this book and hundreds of common sense examples will show you what a visual workplace is and how to apply it to your own world.

In fact, I think you will discover in this book (or already know) what David and I discovered so many years ago: the visual workplace is its own distinct approach to excellence, with its own distinct benefits, and its own distinct implementation methodologies.

Yes, you are right: The visual workplace is not the same as 5S. It is greater than that. And it is greater by

far than “a place for everything and everything in its place.” But even more, you are right in recognizing your own 5S efforts will slide back into disorganization—they will fail—without the visual workplace.

I'd like to say this again: No matter how much a company tries, it will never be able to sustain its 5S outcomes if it does not get visual. In fact, around my company we say: *You won't get lean until you get visual.* And we are so convinced of that, that it has become our company motto. And that's a little scary because we really are saying that a company will fail at lean if it doesn't implement the visual workplace.

In a way, David and I have a selfish reason for wanting you to read Dr. Galsworth's book, *Work That Makes Sense*. VWP now provides systems that allow a company to create its own visuals in-house and on-demand for a fraction of the cost to buy them. David and I want to take that much further. We want to offer companies do-it-yourself tools to get and stay visual—to imbed and sustain lean gains through visuality. Yet until our customers understand that there is much further to go, we cannot really do that.

To go much further, we need a new horizon. And it seems the only way for us to get a new horizon is to make one. We are convinced that this book will go a long way in helping that to happen.

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