

**25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL**



**25<sup>TH</sup> LCI CONGRESS**  
**OCTOBER 24-27, 2023**

# **Lean in Action: Lean into the Resistance to Improve Results**

**SMITHGROUP**

Mark Jussaume, Leigh Snow, Laurie DaForno

**25 YEARS OF LEARNING: SUPERCHARGE YOUR LEAN JOURNEY IN THE MOTOR CITY**

October 25, 2023



# Introduction

I am hardwired to resist change.



# Who are we?



**Laurie DaForno, AIA,  
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# Lean In Action

## What is Resistance?

**1. The refusal to accept or comply with something; the attempt to prevent something by action or argument.**

“She put up no resistance to being led away”

Similar: opposition to, hostility to, aversion to, refusal to accept, unwillingness to accept, disinclination to accept, reluctance to accept, lack of enthusiasm for

Opposite: acceptance; receptivity



# Who are you?

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- Contractors & Builders
- Designers – Architects & Engineers
- Owners & OPMs
- Trade Partners
- Other Lean Professionals

# What our resistors to Lean look like.....



"I'm too busy. I have work to do!"



"I don't get it...Too many weird words"



"Not another initiative!"



"I don't need to improve."



"Hi. I'm Steve."

# Why do people resist?



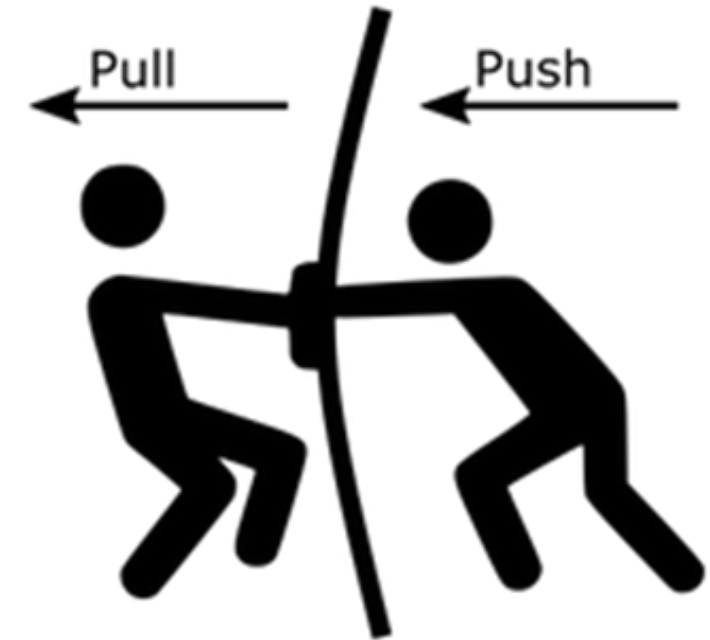
Meet “Steve”

- “1-2-4-ALL”
  - Silent reflection (1 min)
  - Pair up to discuss with one other person (2 min)
  - Get together with another pair (total 4 people) (4 mins)
  - We’ll share what we heard & learned

Liberating Structure 1-2-4-ALL

# What are the possible responses to resistance?

- Opposing the Resistance
  - Ignoring
  - Denying
  - Overpowering
- Embracing the Resistance
  - Listening
  - Adjusting
  - Accommodating
  - Guidance





# What is possible if we can reduce the resistance to Lean?



Flow



Curiosity

Learning



Active engagement



Continuous improvement

Inclusion



Being our best selves

# Lean Into the Resistance

## Make your team the Hero

1. Get Curious
2. Connect Lean to the Work
3. Make Lean Accessible
4. Give People Choice

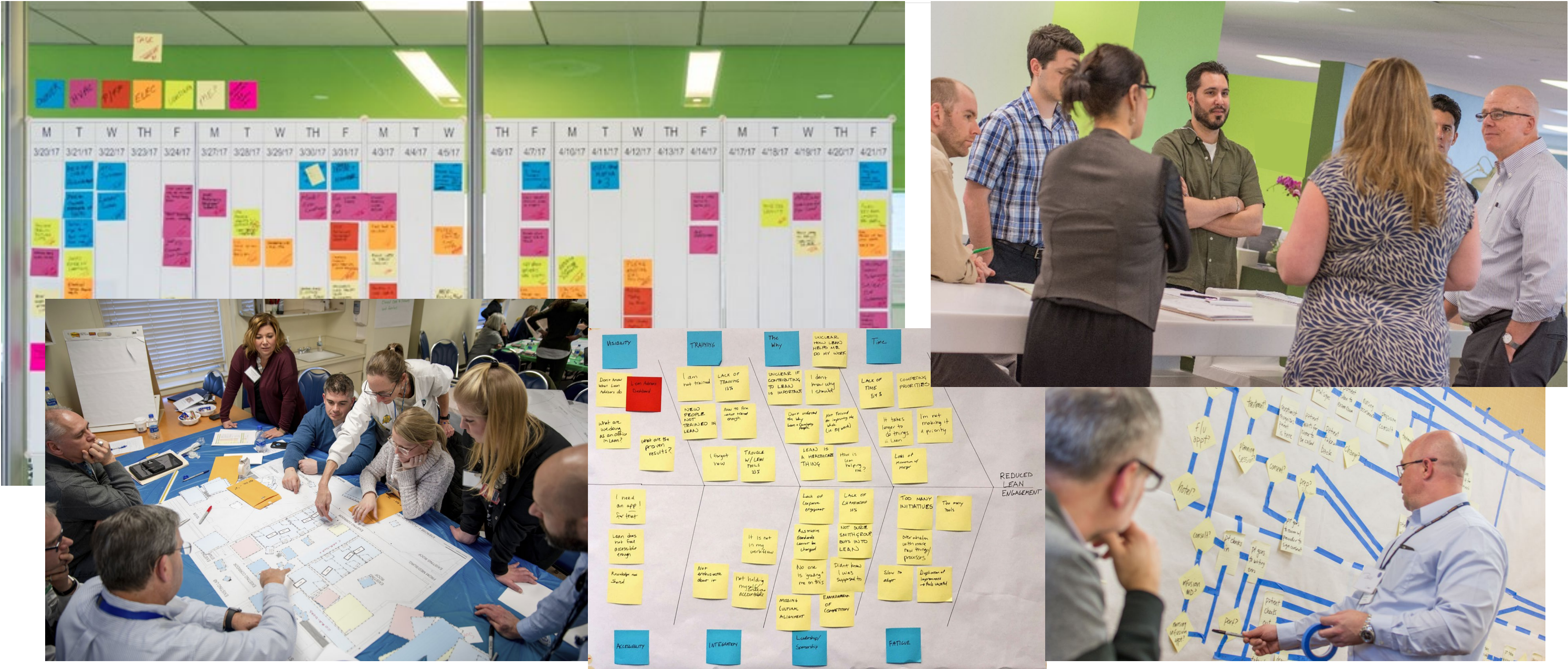


# Background: **Lean in Action** at SmithGroup





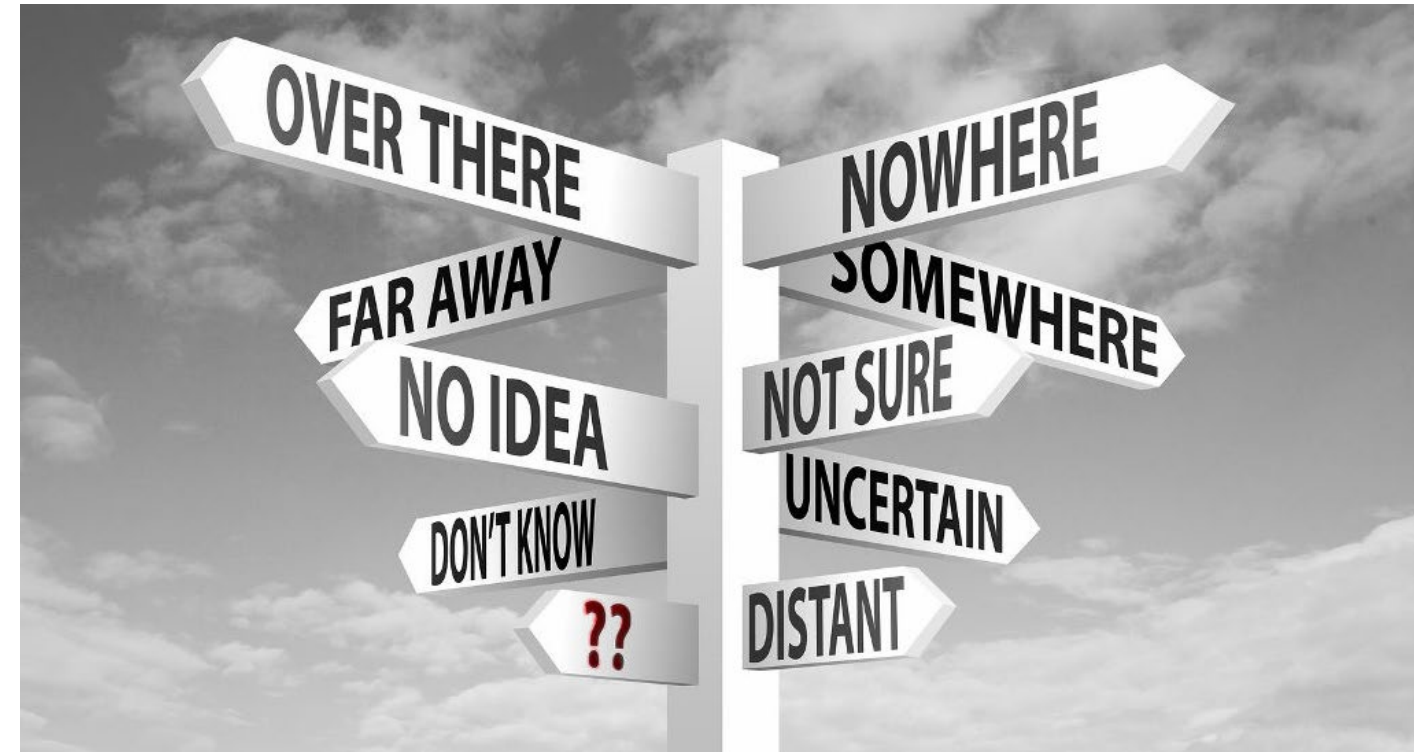
# Lean @ SmithGroup Boston 2012-2022



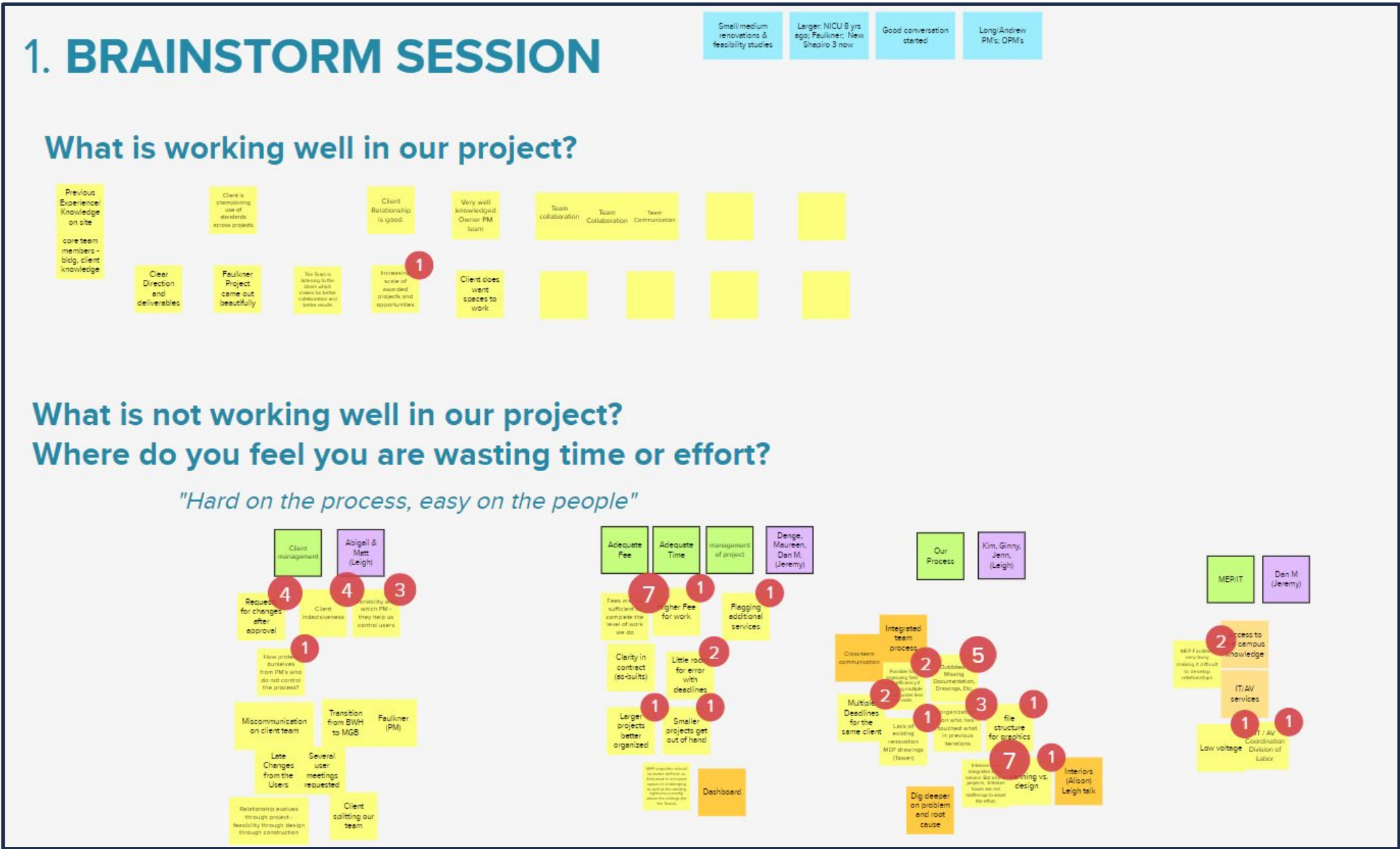


# Starting Point 2022

- We are extremely busy
- We have many new staff members (50% of our office new in last 4 years)
- No clear Lean onboarding process for 2 years
- Many people do not see the value – they are RESISTANT



# The Story of “Lean in Action”



# Lean in Action Structure

1. Take it to the project level
2. Then pull out the themes and create cross-sectional work groups

1. Client success playbook
2. Getting the right things done
3. Minimizing impact of project stops and starts
4. Onboarding team members onto a project
5. Multiple projects at same institution
6. High performance team



# Lean in Action: The Details





# Fundamental Shift

From: “What is the matter with our team?”

To: “What matters to our team?”



# Make the Team the Hero

1. Lead with **curiosity**
2. Connect Lean to the **daily work**
3. Make Lean **accessible**
4. Give people **choice**



# What was...

- Lean Advisors don't understand the overall staff resistance
- Kept making presentations about the principles and tools
- Some resistors just ignored Lean altogether
- Some use tools but don't know / don't want to acknowledge it



# 1. Get Curious

- Invite resistors into the Lean Advisors Group
- Work to understand the resistance
- Ask them simple questions
- Listen (Plus-Delta)
- Dig deep with A3's

**A3 - MINIMIZING IMPACTS OF PROJECTS STOPS AND STARTS**  
AUTHOR: LEIGH SNOW/LAURA HERBERT | REVIEWER: MARK JUSSAUME | DATE: 01/11/2023

**BACKGROUND**  
Our clients often need to suspend project progress for reasons we cannot control. Stopping work mid-stream and re-starting weeks or months later causes confusion and re-work. How can we minimize the negative impact of going on hold and optimize the re-start process?

**PROBLEM ANALYSIS / ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS**

- Staff not clear on roles or process pertaining to hold & re-start
- Staff does not know what to document and where to put it
- We have not acknowledged and documented the effort needed to stop and restart a project effectively and efficiently

**CURRENT STATE**

- Knowledge of project status is not shared uniformly across teams
- Process and roles for documenting project before hold is not clear
- Project information and status of decisions are not easily accessible
  - People have a hard time remembering project details
  - Information is stored in many places
- Staff is often reassigned once project goes on hold – lose project knowledge
- Staff feel pressure to stop all work immediately
- We do not always account for the time needed to close a project down or start it back up
- People are wasting time and doing re-work

**COUNTERMEASURES**

- Develop a checklist of actions for team members

**TARGET STATE**

- We have a clear and simple process for putting a project on hold and bringing it off hold
- Process is shared with everyone
- Team communicates fully on the stop and start process
- Communication protocols during hold are clear to everyone
- Allocate sufficient time for staff to document work properly at stop and to get up to speed at re-start
- Information is filed in a known and shared location
- Most recent project documents (drawings, images, renderings, presentations, specs) are clearly named, filed and accessible to team
- Project progress and outstanding issues are clearly summarized
- Target: less wasted time and frustration

**IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PLAN & FOLLOW UP**

- Test checklist on a project and get feedback on lessons learned
- Update checklist and make sure all PM's and PIC's are aware of it and can implement on their projects
- Continue revising and improving checklist



# What was...

- Team under heavy deadlines
- Lean instruction was abstract, theoretical
- Seemed like it was separate from our daily work
- People struggled to make the connection about how Lean could help them



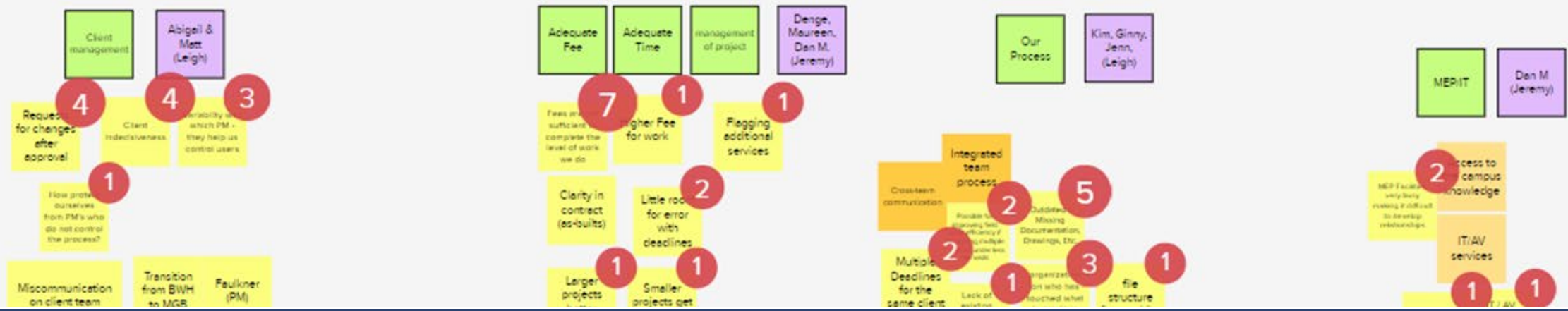
# 2. Connect Lean directly to the project work

## What is working well in our project?



## What is not working well in our project? Where do you feel you are wasting time or effort?

*"Hard on the process, easy on the people"*



# What was...

- Many were “put-off” by the fancy lingo
- Lean feels like a secret club
- People are resistant to new ideas they can’t relate to



### 3. Make Lean Accessible

- Make lean simple and inclusive
- Use plain language - don't call it Lean
- Keep teams small
- Establish safe space to ask questions

## Lean Lingo Bingo

WASTE WALL	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)	MUDA - WASTE	IPD	STANDARD WORK
FISHBONE	GAME BOARD/CHICLET/PERFECT DIAGRAM	STAND UPS	SET BASED DESIGN	POKEYOKE
CHOOSING BY ADVANTAGES	COUNTER MEASURE	GOING TO GEMBA	RAPID PROTOTYPE	PROCESS/JOURNEY MAP
ANDON CORD / PULL THE CORD	A3	MOMENTUM MAP	KANBAN	DOT VOTING
3P	FAILURE DEMAND	PDCA	PULL PLANNING	KAIZEN



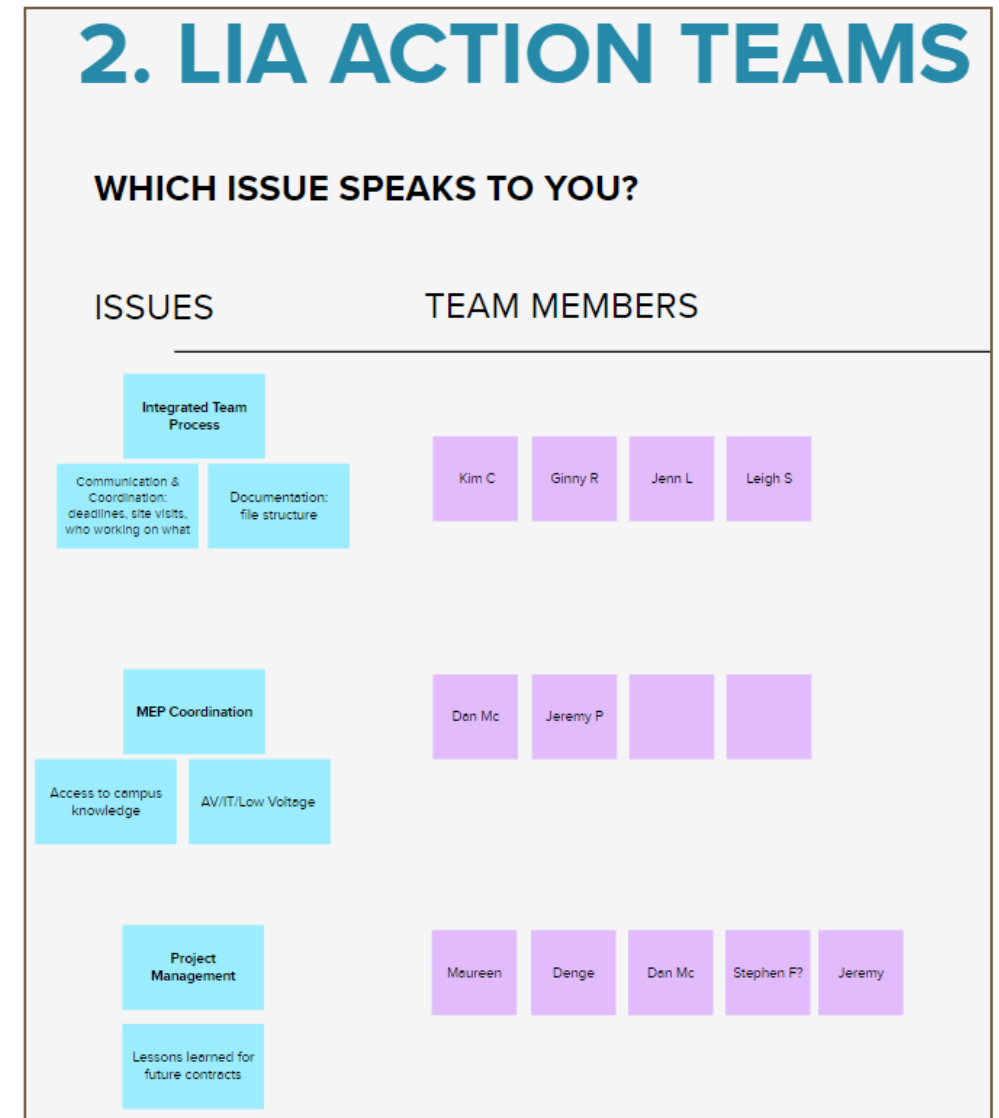
# What was...

- People feel pressure to “Do Lean”
- Don’t understand the why
- We assumed they needed to “Do Lean”
- Solution looking for a problem
- Resistance to change



## 4. Give people choice & ownership

- Help everyone understand the WHY
- Identify those most passionate about improving the work
- Extend an invitation rather than an assignment
- Empower people to make change
- Have them present it to their colleagues



# We accomplished a lot

- Moved average attendance at our meetings from 16 to 46
- Many team members, including resistors, are actively engaged in improving the way we work
- Lean in Action Teams:
  - Developed six detailed A3's
  - Created new tools that are being tested and used
  - Planted seeds that will continue to grow

1. Client success playbook

2. Getting the right things done

3. Minimizing impact of project stops and starts

4. Onboarding team members onto a project

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# And we still have further to go.....

- We're feeling a little stuck – how do we **revive the momentum**?
- How do we **coordinate overlapping work** of different LIA teams?
- Who owns implementing & **maintaining changes**?
- What is the best way to **socialize the changes**?
- How do we best insert **standard work** back into the projects?



# What could be...

- Reconnect everyone to the why of Lean
- Process for implementing new standard work
- Refine forums for sharing knowledge and lessons learned
- Set deadlines; keep teams accountable
- More.....



# Shifting the Mindset



*How can you apply this tomorrow?*

## How might you make your team ‘the hero’?

“1-2-4-ALL”

- Silent reflection (1 min)
- Pair up to discuss with one other person (2 min)
- Get together with another pair (total 4 people) (4 mins)
- We’ll all share what we heard & learned

Liberating Structure 1-2-4-ALL



# You are the hero







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**In the spirit of continuous improvement, we would like to remind you to complete this session's survey! We look forward to receiving your feedback.**

# Contact Us

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Thank you for attending this presentation. Enjoy the rest of the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual LCI Congress!