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articles

Covid-19 and the future of "Lean"



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Covid-19 and the future of "Lean"

By Carlo Scodanibbio

Late 2019. The world changed: once more. Dramatically. Irreversibly.

The Corona Virus, or Covid-19, has given an unprecedented spin to this world of ours. This Pandemic has made obsolete almost everything we knew, we believed in, we were used to.

The overall impact of Covid-19 - to date - is immense: scientists, economists, politicians, thinkers, church leaders, philosophers and psychologists (among others) are trying hard to understand, to explain, to foresee, to recommend, to take measures.... it's their duty, or their job, or their passion.

It's not within the scope and style of this web site to add comments or explanations to the billions we hear on a daily basis with regard to Covid-19.

However, it is certainly within the scope of this web site to make suggestions and recommendations to people in Industry about how to tackle the enormous challenges of the years to come.

In line with my Philosophy, Vision and Mission - I, Carlo Scodanibbio, strongly believe that, sooner or later, this Pandemic will be over: no doubt about.

Human Kind has gone through the most incredible difficulties for thousands and thousands of years: all of them rather successfully overcome.

Human kind will make it also this time, once more. It's just a matter of time.

However, the world will never be the same as before: after Covid-19 and all its by-products, the challenges for all Industrial & Business Organizations will be tougher than ever. Only the fittest, the best, **the Leanest** will survive and will be in a position to tackle the difficult years ahead with a high level of confidence.

BUT: NOW it's the right time to prepare.

Before Covid-19 there wasn't one single Enterprise or Organization that could proclaim itself 100% Lean.

Although there were thousands and thousands, world-wide, that had made enormous progresses in the *Lean* road.

And after? After Covid will be a thing of the past?

There will be no such thing as "...*hah, back to business.....*" or "...*business as usual....*".

The law of "*Survival of the fittest*" will apply in full - no doubt about. It's well verified at the date of releasing this announcement. It will be even more after.....

Who will **the Fittest** be?

The Fittest will be those Enterprises and Organizations that will be ready to deploy in full all **Lean Management/Lean Thinking** principles *in a novel way*.

Why?

Because after this tremendous change brought-in by Covid-19, only those who will be ready to deliver to Clients - in a very creative way - the highest **Value** with minimal/nil **Waste** may hope to survive - to prosper - and even to excel.

BUT: while **Lean Principles** will always be the same, the adaptation of those principles to a world that will be radically changed will require a high degree of *creativity* and *commitment/involvement* by ALL.

After Covid-19 era (assuming there will be a definite "after"), the world will continue to change at an unprecedented speed and with novel features in continuous evolution: "stability" will simply be non-existent. Markets will change their features rapidly and frequently. Social issues, factors and parameters will be in continuous evolution. The impact of climatic changes may become unbearable. Technology will also upgrade to levels unknown today. And so on.

Therefore: strategies, approaches, and styles of operations will need to be in continuous adaptation/evolution accordingly.

This will command a combined effort, *top-down* driven but with the highest *bottom-up* contribution: all resources, all brains, all spirits will need to be mobilised.

Because only in this way, Organizations will be able to generate timely responses suited to novel, unforeseeable circumstances.

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Ideas will win. Speed will win. It will be everybody's task to come up rapidly with simple, effective, inexpensive ideas suited to spot and generate opportunities, overcome difficulties, create new operational dynamics....

It won't be easy: we are not much used to it. It will be challenging: a new breed of people will be required. It will be tough: "traditional" management will need to quit, replaced by a new style "participation management".

NOW is the right time to prepare for it.

NOW is the right time to make **ALL** conscious of the most basic existential principle: "*each one of us is fully responsible for his/her life - no-one else is*".

NOW is the right time to sensitize **ALL** to change and to the need for change and continuous adaptation.

NOW is the right time to instil in **everybody's** mind concepts of *commitment* and *participation/involvement*.

NOW is the right time to educate and train **ALL** in basic *Lean* principles.

NOW is the right time to explain to **ALL** basic principles of *Creative Thinking* and generation of Ideas.

NOW is the right time.



Carlo Scodanibbio, born in Macerata (Italy) in 1944, holds an Italian doctor degree in Electrical Engineering (Politecnico di Milano - 1970).

He has over 49 years of experience in Plant Engineering, Project Engineering and Project Management, as well as Industrial Engineering and Operations Management. Free-lance Consultant since 1979, he has worked in a wide spectrum of companies and industries in many countries (Southern Africa - Italy - Cape Verde - Romania - Malta - Cyprus - Lebanon - Mauritius - Malaysia - Nigeria - Kenya - India - Saudi Arabia - Seychelles), and operates as an Independent Professional Consultant and Human Resources Trainer to industry. His area of intervention is: World Class Performance for Small and Medium Enterprises in the Project, Manufacturing, and Service sectors. His favourite area of action is: the "lean" area.

He has co-operated, inter-alia, with the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce, the Cyprus Productivity Centre, the Malta Federation of Industry, the Mauritius Employers' Federation, the Romanian Paper Industry Association, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the University of Cape Town.

His courses and seminars, conducted in English, Italian and French, have been attended by well over 20.000 Entrepreneurs, Managers, Supervisors and Workers. They feature a very high level of interaction, and are rich in simulations, exercising and real case studies. The approach is invariably "hands-on" and addressed to immediate, practical application.

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