

HalMacomber

The Project Reformer's e-Tip of the Week

024: Tightly Couple Learning with Action

We learned from Toyota not to produce in large batches. Doing so creates wastes in storage, in tracking, in rework, in movement, and in space. Toyota's goal is *single-piece flow* at the signal of the customer. But why is it so important to do just one at a time. The answer is we want to learn from each action we take. Toyota sees it as the opportunity to test and re-test their hypothesis of how to do work effectively. Here's five ways you can begin adopting the principle *tightly couple learning with action* on your projects:

1. Meet at the end of each day for just 5 minutes with the last planners on your project to give them the opportunity to report on the work they finished for the day as they had promised to do. Identify at that time any reasons for not finishing promised work. Replan as necessary.
2. Do detailed planning for short horizons (6 weeks). Review the outcome, then do more detailed planning.
3. Conduct a plus-delta review at the end of each planning meeting. Start the next meeting by referring back to the last review. Select one item from that list for focus during the meeting.
4. Have a conversation with the whole team on something that needs improvement. Take action based on an 80% complete solution. Try it out. Review the results. Then create an 80% solution for the balance of the issue.
5. Attack the delays on your project. Explore with your team what keeps them from more closely coupling one person's work with another's work. Do an experiment. Learn. Re-do the experiment.

Put these to work on your project immediately. Start by discussing this Project e-Tip with your team. You might want to create a contest with them to see who can generate the most ways for coupling learning with action.

The Project Leaders' Studio™

©2004 Hal Macomber | weblog.halmacomber.com | [e-Tip Archive](#) | [PDF](#) | [Submit Tip](#)