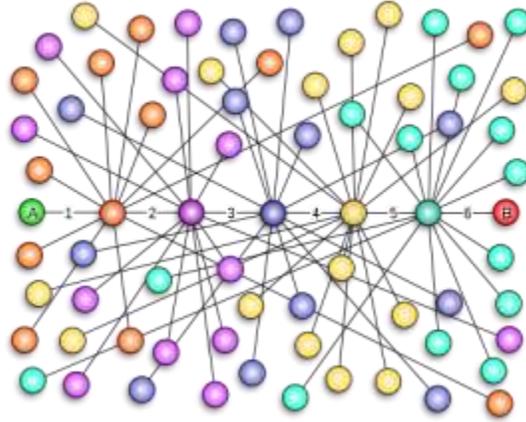


THE VALUE OF PEER REVIEW



It takes a wide, diverse set of skills and knowledge to be a best-in-class manufacturer today. Costs are scrutinized like never before, companies are pushing to achieve greater quality for less cost and it's become very difficult to meet an ever-growing list of regulatory requirements.

While every company and industry has unique characteristics, there's much to gain from sharing best practices. It's surprising what you can learn if you keep an open mind and expose yourself to what is being done by those in other industries. For example, if you are just starting to implement a Lean manufacturing program, imagine what could be learned by studying the practices of General Motors or its suppliers that work under very strict Just in Time schedules with replenishment requirements that might be measured in hours.

Similarly, when considering the unique challenges of regulatory compliance, imagine the takeaways that could be gleaned from speaking with compliance officers working at Bombardier, McDonnell Douglas, or medical device and pharmaceutical companies, each of whom operate in a very difficult environment for compliance.

Last week I had the opportunity to attend Apriso's Community Summit. Attendees came together in Cincinnati, Ohio, and then later took a tour of L'Oréal's facility in Florence, Kentucky. This peer-to-peer manufacturing technology conference offered a unique venue to network with manufacturing executives from other industries.

As Morris Lenczicki, a Vice President for L'Oréal's North American Operations put it, "Attending this event was a great way to learn from our manufacturing peer's experiences. The diverse industry backgrounds, including executives from Cummins, General Motors, Hitachi, MANE, Lincoln Electric and Ball Packaging, helped to provide different perspectives and possible solutions to common challenges."

It turns out many of the challenges faced by the manufacturing industry – improving operational agility, continuous process improvement and streamlining IT systems – are obstacles faced by many, regardless of industry.

It is easy to see things from a single perspective when you only discuss challenges within your own organization or between other industry colleagues.

When you expand discussion to those outside your sphere of influence, to those in your second, third or fourth degree of separation, it is amazing how a fresh perspective can yield a different approach to what might not have been considered. This is the value of peer-to-peer review. It is only accentuated as you expand your “pool” of peers. Attending events and user groups is an excellent way to accomplish this objective.

Source: <http://www.aprison.com/blog/2011/10/the-value-of-peer-review/>