

Episode 015: Lean Management_ Improving Daily Meetings with Meredith Fisher and Stephane Hill

Welcome to Lean Leadership for Ops Managers, the podcast for leaders in Ops Management who want to spark improvement, foster engagement, and boost problem solving - AND still get their day job done. Here's your host, Leadership Trainer, Lean Enthusiast, and Spy Thriller Junkie, Jamie V. Parker.

Jamie: Hello, hello, Jamie here, and today we're talking about daily meetings, huddles, startups, tiered meetings, stand-ups, whatever you call them, we're going to talk about them. Now, back in episode 12, Ron Pereira from Gemba Academy walked us through four routines that make up the Lean Daily Management System. And many organizations use daily huddles as that core routine that kind of brings it all together. But let's be real, building, engaging, effective daily huddles that serve this greater purpose can be challenging to achieve in reality. So today, we have two guests joining us to provide their perspectives and suggestions based off their real-world experience. First, Meredith Fisher is going to join us, and she'll share some specific recommendations for those who are just getting started or maybe those of us that are restarting daily huddles. And then she'll shift to share considerations for those that have already built that huddle foundation and are ready to advance in maturity.

After that, we'll dig into one of the key challenges I hear about a lot - low engagement. Stephanie Hill is actually going to come on to share four considerations for you when you find that huddles have become an exercise of just checking the boxes, rather than a meaningful engagement. And then finally, of course, I'm going to throw in my perspective, too. So you can find more information about both of our guests, including links to connect with them at the show notes. Just head over to processplusresults.com/podcast, and then find episode number 15.

Let's start off by hearing from Meredith Fisher. Now Meredith is on a mission to build a more human-centered health care experience. And she has experience actually helping teams build a daily management system, including a multi-site tiered huddle structure, and daily problem solving towards strategic goals using *Toyota Kata*. So super excited to have Meredith joining us.

Meredith: Thank you, Jamie.

Jamie: Well, before we jump into talking about daily meetings, can you just give us a little introduction? Tell us a little bit about you and your experience.

Meredith: Absolutely. So my name is Meredith Fisher, I work in health care and the Lean improvement world. I'm located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and much of my experience has been in health care systems in the area here. And for the past quite a few years, I've

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been working inside health systems, helping partner with Operations Leaders really to put in place Lean management systems that help make it easier for leaders to be able to do their work and to keep our patients safe and provide the best possible care. So it's really exciting and I'm excited to be able to talk with you about daily meetings. It's one of the things that I've seen be most powerful in getting that that Lean journey going.

Jamie: Yeah, absolutely. We had Ron Pereira on recently and he talked about that as well is this daily meetings as a part of a broader Daily Management System, right?

Meredith: Absolutely, yes. And what I've seen is it really can kind of pull all the parts and pieces together and help energize that Daily Management System and your Lean management system. It's a great place to demonstrate and practice all those Lean leader behaviors that we hear about and that we learn about, so it becomes a really nice practice ground for us and a learning experience.

Jamie: Well, let's start out. This podcast is really designed for Ops Managers and for those managers that are out there who are getting started with daily meetings or maybe restarting them. I know if anyone's like me, you've had a few fall downs and get back ups, so maybe starting or restarting. What either recommendations do you have or potential ideas or things they should consider as they're getting their daily meetings, either on the schedule or back on schedule?

Meredith: Right. So for Operations Managers who are really just starting or like you said, working on re-energizing those daily meetings, I find that it's helpful to ground yourself and your team in the intent and the purpose of those daily meetings and keep it simple. Don't try to do too much too fast. So think about maybe focusing on planning for a safe, smooth day. And even just zeroing in on safety as a starting point can be really powerful. So I work in health care and when we start with safety, it's a wonderful way to demonstrate that respect for people, and that's for our caregivers and teammates as much as for our patients. You can even really start that conversation and a simple daily meeting, if you're truly just getting started with a broad and open question like, you know, "What safety risks are you noticing?", and start harvesting those from your team.

Jamie: Yeah, I love that idea of saying, "Hey, we don't have to nail it all from the very beginning." And really understanding where's that one place we could start, maybe safety being a great starting point.

Meredith: Right. Yes. And one thing that can happen when we start by asking that question and starting with safety, sometimes we have to overcome ways of thinking and working that

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have come before, that happens with any improvement, right? So you might hear crickets at first. I've definitely seen that happen.

Jamie: Oh, I think everybody's out there nodding their heads right now.

Meredith: Right. And it gets uncomfortable as the leader, standing there holding the silence and waiting for someone to go first and to speak. So practice holding that silence. And the other thing that could be helpful is to go first and model the way, so you have some things in your back pocket that you've noticed, and go ahead and share what you're observing so that we can start to shift our mindset. You have to kind of show "Hey, it's good. It's good to bring the problems up, we want to see that." So the first person that brings up an issue, even if it's something that doesn't seem high priority, or maybe it's something that's already been solved and there's an answer for, it would be great to just encourage, recognize, thank team members when they share that safety concern. It can be really powerful how you respond to that problem when it's raised. So really thank the team members when they uncover and share that.

The other thing you can do is really call it out when you notice that meaningful and quiet when you're standing there in front of your team as the leader, and no one's responding and maybe it's gone on for a couple days, you know, just, "Hey, I'm noticing this." And I've worked with teams that have rated themselves on how close they are to embracing that idea of problems or goals, or no problem is a problem. And just even facing that kind of level setting across the team, like, "Hey, we're not very good at this yet, so we're going to have to practice." And others, if they discover that, they just wrote that really big, "Problems are gold" right across the top of their daily meeting boards so they could see it every day.

Jamie: Yes, well, and I think if we go back to this idea that hey, you might not be walking into saying, "Hey, I'm having these daily meetings, and we already have a culture where we embrace problems." And so I think that does contribute to the silence and the awkwardness and saying, hey, as a leader, you've got a role to play in changing that.

Meredith: Right? Yep. Exactly. And you can really model it, and it will take time, but it will happen, because especially with the cadence of having that reliable routine of daily meetings, your team will start to see I've got a place to go with this and we're going to hold each other accountable to resolve these issues. That's another really powerful thing is when issues are raised, of course, closing the loop and using good problem solving, and PDSA cycles and sharing the learning. But of course, that accountability is another really powerful thing to make sure that the team is aware when those issues are raised of how they were resolved, and hopefully even including them in solving the problems.

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Jamie: Yeah, I love it. So that's some great points to call out for those folks who are getting started. Now, I know that some listeners have been doing daily meetings for a while. They feel like their foundation is set and now they're ready to mature their meetings, right? How do we have a greater impact? How do we take this to the next level? So for those folks that are ready for that and want to advance their daily meetings, what ideas do you have for them?

Meredith: Absolutely. So I would say that once the foundation is there, and you really have that daily routine, I would offer a couple of suggestions based on the idea that as we said earlier in our conversation that huddles are really the core of that Lean management system. So the intent of the Lean management system is to develop people to solve problems. The huddle is a great opportunity to do that. So first, I would suggest building out your tiered huddles, and that's scalable depending on the size of your organization or your team. In the health care organizations where I've worked, they've tended to be pretty big and spread out across multiple locations. And even in really large organizations, we've been able to escalate issues for support and awareness of risk each day by 10 am. That's across multiple sites, and we know where those issues need to go and who needs to solve for them. And when that happens, our frontline staff and leaders really are able to trust the process and adjust is a great opportunity to keep expanding the learning and expanding the impact when you do have multiple sites, especially. So you're learning from others' potential errors or their errors, and preventing those going forward, which is really useful.

Jamie: Yeah.

Meredith: The other thing that tiered huddles do-- Oh, go ahead, Jamie.

Jamie: Yeah, so when I think about this tiered process, and I mean, I can remember kind of learning about it initially, and reading about it and thinking, "Gosh, that's a lot of levels" and all of this, but then hearing you talk about it, really showing the importance of hey, what we're doing is we're creating trust in the process and we're demonstrating that when we're in maybe our frontline Tier 1 meetings, that the team members that are coming, they can see that activity happen, they can see that those issues are getting raised, and they're coming back with, whether it's countermeasures or whatever support they might need, and how I bet that has a pretty big impact on engagement.

Meredith: Absolutely, absolutely. And it becomes something that once you get to that point, wow those daily meetings are not going to go away because we know we need them, and we trust that process. And yeah, it becomes really powerful.

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Jamie: Yeah. And even in a smaller organization, it might just be two tiers, right? Like, it might just be going to that one next set of folks who have the ability to impact things that the first group doesn't. So it doesn't have to follow a specific structure as much as it's like going back to that purpose.

Meredith: Yeah, totally scalable. And yeah, when we think about being able to develop to people solve problems, those tears, one thing to think about is problem solving at the right level. So when we put the tiered meetings in place and those tiered hurdles in place, we don't automatically just escalate every issue all the way up through the chain. We want to solve it at the lowest possible level in the organization but we still might want to escalate for awareness so others can learn.

Jamie: Love it. All right, so we talked a little bit about tears, what else you got for us?

Meredith: So in terms of continuing that kind of maturing of the huddles, I would also recommend - this is where, as you were saying that Ron Pereira is shared as part of the Daily Management System - starting to pull in visualizing your problem solving around some core processes. And this is where we can get to a daily cadence of looking at and managing the processes that you're running in your department, in your area right at the front line if you're at that tier one level. It gives you that reliable routine of looking at that process, looking at the health of that process with your team, and being able to engage them in some problem solving around it. Or "wWere running some PDSA cycles on this. Here's what we learned yesterday, so here's what we need to do differently today, going forward." So really you can start to tie it into that rapid cycle improvement work that you're doing.

Jamie: Yeah, well, and it almost sounds like I feel like a lot of times when we get started, there's so much about just kind of reporting out some of these numbers and then trying to get people to raise problems. And now you're really saying, "Okay, now let's use it more systematically."

Meredith: Yeah, exactly. And it's, again, getting to that opportunity to practice our problem solving, to walk that walk. And I think, of course, it helps operationally. It helps us achieve the results that we're looking for, which is huge, too. So it's great when we get to do all those things. We get to engage people. We get to surface the problems that can be solved, that can build trust, and we can actually get our results that we need operationally, which is great.

Jamie: All right. So let me ask you this. We're going to just say it like it is right, which is, it sounds really easy. In reality, that's not generally the case and so it can be tough, right? It can be tough. There's a lot of obstacles that we hit when we're trying to integrate daily meetings or

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huddles into our every day and then figure out how to use them to improve our business. So it can be frustrating sometimes when you're the one that's trying to really do this with your team. So what maybe words of encouragement would you have, or suggestions you have for the folks that are really in the weeds trying to make this work?

Meredith: Yeah, well, first, it takes time. Like we said at the beginning, starting small and focused is really important. And just like any other process, this is just like that, right? Try it and learn. So I really encourage reflecting on the huddle with your team, especially as you're starting more frequently. It can be as simple as "What went well today? And what should we do differently tomorrow?" We don't have to do a complicated analysis, luckily, of our huddle process. We can just make quick adjustments, keep what works, and adjust what we think could be better. So that might be every single day that you ask that question at the beginning and then less frequently as you go, or when you make those adjustments over time. But just like anything else, this is all about learning.

Jamie: Yes, yes. So let's take some of the pressure off, right?

Meredith: Yes, exactly. Yes, we don't have to do it all at once. There's no one right way to do it. Just remember to ground yourself in what you're trying to do, the core of what you're trying to do. And if you remind yourself of that, and you remind your team of it, then you're going to end up with a great result.

Jamie: Awesome. This is fantastic. I love you walking through these different recommendations and then keeping that purpose and what are we trying to achieve in mind.

Meredith: Great, yes. I think it's easy to get kind of caught up depending on your culture a little bit on the standard work or the way to run the huddle or the way the board looks. Don't get too deep into that when you're getting started. Just make sure if you've got an engaged team and they're speaking up at the huddle, then you know something's going right. Keep going.

Jamie: Yes, perfect. Meredith, thank you so much for hopping on and joining us and sharing some of your experience and lessons learned with daily meetings. We appreciate you joining us today.

Meredith: Absolutely. It's my pleasure. Thank you, Jamie, for inviting me.

Jamie: Some great tips from Meredith, really love hearing from her experience. And I particularly like her call out that we need to be purposeful in how we create a space where team members openly raise problems, particularly if you're starting out or if you find you just never got that traction you were expecting. Because the reality is it doesn't just happen

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right, that environment doesn't just happen. It happens because we create it. Now we're going to hear from Stephanie Hill. Stephanie is owner of Lightbulb Moment Consulting, which provides services for businesses that want to improve their organization's effectiveness and efficiency. Hi, Stephanie. Welcome to the show. So glad to have you here.

Stephanie: Hi, Jamie, thanks so much for inviting me to participate.

Jamie: All right. Well, before we jump into our topic of daily meetings, would you just tell us a little bit about who you are and what some of your experience is?

Stephanie: Sure. I own Lightbulb Moment Consulting out of Des Moines, Iowa. I've been working in continuous improvement for the past 20 years, and half of that has been with manufacturing organizations. The other half has been in insurance, health care and retail. I have a Master Black Belt in Lean Six Sigma, a master's degree in public health, bachelor's in chemistry and a certification in strategic HR leadership. I have two sons who recently graduated high school, one during COVID which is kind of crazy. I have a cat and a new used dog I say, because I adopted her in May and she just celebrated her 16th birthday. And it's also worth noting that I'm a huge Lego fan.

Jamie: Oh, wow! Oh, my goodness, so much there.

Stephanie: I also wanted to say that I have been involved in stand-ups not just in the manufacturing setting, but I've also been in finance, customer experience and supply chain, setting up those stand-up boards too.

Jamie: Yeah, so you're all over the place, tons of education. So it sounds like you might be a lifelong learner.

Stephanie: Yes. [A ton of us are 19:28].

Jamie: Yeah. I feel you on that for sure. And then really broad experience, which I think just can inform so much of how we show up and what we learn and how all of that comes together when we have such broad experience, so that's awesome.

Stephanie: Yeah, definitely.

Jamie: All right, well, let's jump into talking about these daily meetings or startups are huddles, everybody kind of has their own word for them. So you've had quite a bit of experience,

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can you share maybe a challenge that you've seen teams experience when they start bringing in daily meetings into their work?

Stephanie: Yeah, I think that the biggest obstacle I've seen with daily huddles - I'll probably say all kinds of terms really - is just poor engagement. I think every stand-up probably has the intention to be informative, drive action and engage attendees, not just only with the content, but also with each other. But stand-ups can really become routine and more like checking a box if that engagement is not kept in check.

Jamie: So what are some ways that you've seen teams work to kind of address this challenge of low engagement?

Stephanie: Yeah, so I tend to be a list person, so I think of engagement and how we increase engagement through four different ways. So first of all, being sure that we're adding value for each participant. Second, being sure that we are making our boards - the actual visual of the boards - easy to understand. Third, being that we're involving an action and outcome relationship. And then fourth, that we're driving accountability. So I can dive deeper, if that works, into each of those.

Jamie: Yes, that'd be great.

Stephanie: Okay, so in general, what I typically see with manufacturing is that the board has different elements. So typically, we have information under safety, quality, delivery, and cost or SQDC, sometimes called. And then the better boards will have things like problem solving with actions and owners as well. And so just a side note, I have seen very effective stand-ups in the office setting that do not use these elements, but I typically do see them in manufacturing this way and I just kind of think they have a timeless application. So the first one with adding value, if you're anything like me, which you probably are a little bit because you're in Lean, I just hate when people feel like they're wasting their time doing something that's non-value added. And so the heart of Lean is really around reducing those time wasters, reducing waste in general. So just personally, I feel like, it's really important to start with adding value.

So each element of the board can add more value just by viewing it from the attendee's standpoint versus the person who's always putting it together. So it's fine to have standard metrics for each of those areas, especially if they tied to key company metrics, or topics that are being discussed, maybe at the executive level. So those are really important to keep your eye on. But you can also add a rotation of metrics that are meaningful to the attendees. So for instance, if a group just recently did an improvement event, maybe around cycle time in a particular cell, you could have a team representative that's sharing

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the cycle time metrics in that cell for a period of time as they're discussing delivery because that's really personal for them. I mean, there's probably a number of people at the board who have been through that event, and they want to see that improving. And you can do that for any of the metrics really.

Second is that they're easy to understand. So people can always make it to stand-up, and maybe there are multiple shifts in an organization that don't share that same stand-up. You might also have visitors from other departments, or even, you know, I've been to companies where we have tours coming through, people from other locations that are doing benchmarking. So at a glance, you should be able to look at the board and understand why people are there, what they're seeing and what will happen next. I've seen some really good examples, actually, in the finance department. We had a mission at the top of the board, we had a list of acronyms that were commonly used, and we even had equations for what got us to the numbers that were being reported. I also like if there's any, which I'm sure you're probably seeing, like a red, yellow or green designation on a board. So just having a legend that tells people what those colors stand for and what prompts something to turn red, for instance.

In one manufacturing setting, cost was shared as a percentage. And so I asked different participants what they thought that that percentage meant, and most people had no idea. So then a person in the second shift at that same company created a new board, and they not only provided a dollar figure under cost, but they also shared an image of what that dollar figure represented. So for instance, they have a picture of a car or a kid with braces or college or something like that that made the dollar figure more relatable just visually at a quick image for them.

Jamie: I love that.

Stephanie: Yeah, I thought that was really clever. And the other part I liked about that finance board there for two, and we did this with a lot of different departments, but having a mission, I just think that's a great thing to include because it doesn't change unless the group agrees that it needs to change, but it really should provide the why behind the stand-up that ties to the overall company's goals.

Jamie: So let me ask you this. So when you're saying this mission at the top of this board, you're not saying the company mission statement?

Stephanie: No.

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Jamie: All right, tell me what you mean.

Stephanie: So maybe a group comes together and maybe at the top of it, it could say, “We come together daily to ensure we get the best product to our customer as quickly and safely as possible.” Something as basic as that, just so they’re all kind of marching to the same beat, and they get their purpose.

Jamie: Yeah, you know what I think could be really great about that, too, is that we’ve all kind of started something like this and then seen it go off on all of these tangents, and we almost forgot the reason why we’re doing it in the first place.

Stephanie: Yeah, definitely. That’s the whole reason a company has a mission too, right?

Jamie: That's right.

Stephanie: The third thing that you can do is to make sure you involve action-outcome relationship there. So a common discussion around at stand-ups will be around problems that the workforce might be experiencing. So they might want to launch like an A3 or some other kind of problem solving tool. And I’m not saying that they would necessarily do that at the stand-up, they could just kind of initiate it or kick it off or something. But the participants in that problem solving group could be coming back and sharing any action items that they have, and then the group can see tracking of the actions and those outcomes. So being able to witness the full cycle of initiating action toward eliminating or cause and then seeing the outcome of that goes a long way towards engaging participants. They feel like their coming there and taking action and doing something like that, really is making a difference. It’s not just standing there to show up.

Jamie: Yeah.

Stephanie: And then the fourth one, the last one is about accountability. I think I had kind of a transition in my own brain, around the term accountability because I would always hear it used in the phrase “to hold someone accountable”. And that really kind of makes this like disciplinary thing go off in my head like somebody’s going to discipline someone if they’re not doing the thing they’re supposed to do. But I started switching the way I look at the word accountability as more of a term of engagement because when I think about my own experience, if I have accountability, it tells me that I’m included. It says that what I contribute matters, and that people rely on my role to make things work smoothly. So that’s a really important piece to get people to feel engaged. So it can take many shapes in a stand-up. You might have each topic or metric reported by a different person. Maybe each action of the problem solving tool has an owner that can share the status of it. I’ve even

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seen a Gemba rotation at the end of the stand-ups, where people will walk over to different cells. And then we could have people at the cells have responsibilities to talk through what happens at the cell or sharing the cell level metrics. There are all sorts of ways to have accountability grow there. It shouldn't be the same people talking all the time.

Jamie: Yeah, I love that reframe for accountability. Fantastic. And I think you're right. Nobody wants to just come to this meeting and have one person stand up and talk at you. That's not the point, right?

Stephanie: Exactly. Definitely. Yeah. So that's it basically, so I'll just sum it up one more time. First one, adding value for each participant. Second, ensuring your board is easy to understand. Third, involving an action-outcome relationship. And then for providing opportunities for more accountability.

Jamie: Awesome. I love those, Stephanie. These are fantastic, and really great ways of thinking about engagement, and how to make our stand-up meetings actually contribute in some way, right?

Stephanie: Yes, definitely.

Jamie: Yeah, we don't want to just go through the motions. And we don't do it just because we read in a book we're supposed to do it.

Stephanie: Right.

Jamie: Right. We do it because there's a purpose to it.

Stephanie: Exactly. Yep. Totally agree.

Jamie: Fantastic. Well, let me ask you this as we close out. For those that are out there, maybe they've started, maybe they've restarted, maybe they're down the road and trying to get just more maturity and effectiveness, but what maybe final words of encouragement do you have for those Ops Leaders out there who are incorporating daily meetings in their work?

Stephanie: Yeah, so probably two things. I would say first, the most fundamental way to engage people is just by asking their opinion. Periodically stop and ask people how things are or aren't working and ask them to be part of that change. I think it's daunting sometimes to ask people what they think because we don't want to hear the answer; it's going to feel personal. But just objectively find out what they think, and then don't really respond necessarily, just take their answers to heart and see if there are ways to apply. And then

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second, I would say, kudos to the listeners who are already doing stand-ups or who are even thinking about starting them. I think that they go a long way in connecting people to one another, and to their work, as well as to the overall business. So just even getting started I think that you're taking a great step, and you're heading in the right direction.

Jamie: All right, awesome. Stephanie, thanks so much for sharing your insights and things that you've learned along the way. We appreciate you joining us today.

Stephanie: Yeah, thank you.

Jamie: All right, some great tips from Stephanie. How fun was the story where the second shift team member translated the cost into visual images from everyday life, right, braces or a car? I also loved how she talked about making these things more relevant for team members, making huddles more relevant for team members, and the agenda and all that stuff. Because too often, we approach visual management and daily huddles and other systems and tools from our vantage point, and huddles are not for us as leaders. We are not the consumer here. Now, I want to add in a couple of my perspectives based on my experience as a senior Ops Leader who had responsibility, not just for operations, but also for leadership development and continuous improvement across the division.

First, you know I can be a bit contrarian at times, and I can remember having some, let's not call them heated, let's call them passionate discussions with Lean practitioners about daily meetings. I call them shift huddles, so that's the language I'll use. And this was the conflict, right? So I had several highly experienced Lean practitioners tour sites with me, and they suggested changing some things about our shift huddles to make them more, let's say, traditionally Lean. Like there was this prescription - a formula - for how huddle should run and what the board should look like. Like, "Oh, on the top row, it looks should look like this. And then the second row, it should look like this. And then the third row, it should look like this. And the agenda should go this, this, this and this." And this is where I was disagreeing, right? So while we had incorporated some of that into our huddles, we were leaving probably at least 60% of the decisions up to the individual plant teams.

So remember, I'm in this multi-unit situation, we've got 20 plants across the country. So there were some things that were consistent across all plants, right. And then the rest of the stuff, the local teams decided what to do and what to put into practice. And I was getting flack for this, saying that, "The boards need to look like this", or "The agenda needs to be structured like this", or my favorite, if you can hear the sarcasm in my voice, "They have to be standardized from plant to plant." Well, I disagree. To me, the best way to get huddles to happen consistently, and to happen in an effective manner, where team members get value, where team members use them to make better decisions, to build

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teamwork, to improve the work, to develop their skills and capabilities, is to have them map them out and put them into practice.

So we trained all team members on the purpose of huddles and how to get value out of them and how to use visual cues and all the things. Now, they weren't experts, though, right? They had some basic training, they hadn't experienced them in a traditional Lead environment, and so their customization looked different, but it was theirs. And what that meant is that they showed up every single shift and actively participated in them. And not only that, team members facilitated them. Each plant's rotation schedule was different but every plant had a rotation schedule. And huddles were built and facilitated by team members, not by managers. Yes, there was that 40% that was taught and prescribed, right? We have "Hey, these are things that we definitely have to have included, right? It has to incorporate this." And there were guardrails put in place to make sure they were aligned with our true north but then there was also a big section of it that was theirs.

So my perspective, Is this right? If you ask me what your huddle agenda should be, and what your board should look like, my answer is, "What would the team execute consistently and get value from today?" My second perspective is this, and it goes along with the first one. These two kind of go in tandem. Your daily meetings should evolve. Where you start is not where you stay. Let me say that again. With your daily meetings, where you start is not where you stay. We have to allow team members to learn through the process of daily meetings and improve them as they learn.

So here's my story on this. I had a plant that had some of the best daily meetings I've ever seen. And what I mean by that is the engagement level was super high, and the action from the huddles had a great impact. And about nine months after they started, I visited the plant and things just weren't quite the same. They were still good, but it just didn't have the same feel, the same energy, and the same impact. And the plant manager asked me, he's like, how could he keep team members engaged because they had kind of become on this routine thing. That thing that Stephanie talked about before, just checking the box. And they just weren't into it the way they were for the first six months.

What I learned on that visit is that nothing had changed in nine months. It was still the same team member facilitation rotation, the same agenda, the same board with the same KPI categories, the same problem solving queue, and the same report out. So I had to own up on where maybe my communication and leadership may not have been clear and may have contributed to the stagnation and then share. Where they started was not meant to be where they stayed. Teams should evolve their daily meetings as they learn. Remember when I had my first perspective, and I'm like, "Look, I don't need them to be perfect on the get-go. I don't even need them to follow some specific formula as much as I need to get

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team members involved and engaged”? What that means, though, is as they learn, as they learn about lagging metrics versus leading metrics, or indicators, as they learn more about how to use visual management, as they learn more about how to think through problems, as they grow in their teamwork, as they start to learn more about each other’s roles, and all of those things. And by the way, I’m probably going to try and get them exposure to what some other daily meetings look like so they can see those experiences too, whether it’s within my organization, or through a resource like a Gemba Academy or YouTube videos, whatever I can find, right? Maybe I can do some benchmarking with another company locally. So I’m going to try and get some of that exposure. The key is that we want them to learn. And that means that we’ve got to change and iterate through the daily huddle process.

All right, off my soapbox for now until next week anyway. Listen, regardless of where you are in the process of integrating daily huddles into your culture for everyday improvement and people development, I hope you found a little nugget from today. And we heard this both from Meredith and from Stephanie, which is keep the purpose in mind. Why are you doing it? Both of our guests said that. And so I want you to keep that in mind as you wherever you are, as you’re looking at your huddles, and as you’re engaging your team members on your huddles, and how effective are they. What is the purpose? What are you trying to achieve today? Not your long-term goal but today with your huddles, what are you trying to achieve with them?

All right, your next step is to take a few minutes after hearing this podcast and jot down one thing about daily meetings that you would like to take back to your team. Not for them to do and implement, but for you and the team to discuss together. What’s that one thing? Take it back and start a conversation. Now, be sure to connect with today’s guests Meredith and Stephanie. You can learn more about them and find those connection leaks by heading over to processplusresults.com/podcast and find episode 15. Until next time.