

## Safety is a Team Sport | 124

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.

[00:00:29] Hey, Ops Executives and Leaders. Jamie Parker here. Before we jump into today's topics, I actually just wanted to share that I have one opening for my trusted advisor, one on one mentoring program that is coming open in November. You know, I when I work with clients, we don't just work for 3 or 6 months together. Usually they start might start out as a six month engagement. But typically folks stay with me for years, right? For two years, three years, four years. And that's what's been happening.

And that's why I don't have spots open up very often. We do have one client that's transitioning off. And what that means is we have one spot open for the Trusted Advisor program and this is one on one mentoring and coaching where I get to be a thought partner with you as a senior leader to help you work through the challenge that's ahead of you.

It's great to have someone kind of outside of the organization who can listen and really be able to provide both the coaching, which allows you to kind of find some of those answers. Just having a coaching partner, but also to have someone who can be an advisor and provide that thought partnership with you as well. So this is a senior level or a senior level engagement where we meet anywhere from 1 to 3 times a month, depending on your specific scenario, typically for a six month engagement at a time.

[00:01:50] So that opens up in November. I only have one slot opening up. If you're interested, you can go to my website [processplusresults.com](http://processplusresults.com) and fill out the form there.

All right, enough of that business talk. Let's go ahead and jump in. And I want to start with a statement. Safety is a team sport. And I don't just mean this from a cute slogan standpoint.

Earlier this month, I was in New York invited to the GE Lean Mindset event that was hosted by Larry Culp and the GE executive team. And when the formal program kicked off, it started with a safety moment from New York City Fire Department Commissioner Laura Kavanagh. And Commissioner Kavanagh is the first woman to lead the department.

## Safety is a Team Sport | 124

And on a day to day basis, she oversees 17,000 team members and a \$2 billion operating budget. And she stood on stage and declared, nothing is done alone. Now, GE gave me permission to share small audio clips from the event in our podcast episodes. It's actually part of why I was invited there. And so I actually just want to let you hear Commissioner Kavanagh expand on this directly, this idea that nothing is done alone. Listen here.

*[00:03:03] So part one is that nothing is done alone. Fire Department is the ultimate community. It is the ultimate team. And you see some of those things, the things we all love about the fire department. We see them shopping together, living together. But really what it is for them at their core is about the mission to protect their fellow members.*

*So safety is never about them. We actually find often that our members say, I signed up for this, I know I'm doing a dangerous job. I've accepted those risks. But when you say to them you're responsible for the safety of the people around you, they take that incredibly seriously. And I think that our community is so strong because of that commitment to one another, safety, and because of the ethos that that is a 24 seven obligation.*

*It is not only about on the fire ground, but it's about making sure your members are mentally well, that they're taken care of. If something's happening in their life that the firehouse shows up for them. And that continues to reinforce the idea that they are responsible for one another's health and safety, both at work and at home and 24 over seven operation.*

*[00:04:09] It struck me as she shared that individually when thinking about themselves, they will say, you know, I signed up for this. I accepted those risks, and safety may not feel as severe of a mission, but when that gets flipped to being responsible for the safety of the people around you, they take that incredibly seriously. You know, it kind of reminds me of things I've heard from folks who have or are serving in the military, right. This service to others at the core, this commitment to other people.*

And Commissioner Kavanagh was not the only one to talk about safety in this way as more of a team sport or as a product of servant leadership. Patti Poppe is the CEO of PG&E Corporation, California's

## Safety is a Team Sport | 124

largest utility, serving 16 million people. And PG&E has 26,000 coworkers who deliver energy to one of the world's largest economies and are helping to lead the state's clean energy future. And Poppe is the CEO. She's the first female executive to serve as the CEO of two different Fortune 500 companies. And she was speaking and Poppe and her newer leadership team, they are working on a tremendous turnaround.

Safety is a critical component of this turnaround. It is a dangerous injury industry for their team members. And the success or failure of their work can literally it can either kill people or keep them safe. Right. Think about raging fires that can start from faulty transmission lines. It isn't just about money. It's about the lives of human beings.

And Poppe echoed Commissioner Kavanaugh's statements about elevating the safety cause to focus on others. She talked about leading with love and bringing love into the workplace. And Patti, Poppe, she said the greatest expression of love in the workplace is to keep others safe, to call a time out and say, wait a minute, I'm not sure this is right. And she expanded on this further. So here here are her additional comments.

*[00:06:07] You know, I'm sad to say that, you know. In the handful of times that I have attended the funeral of a coworker who died on the job. There is full expression of the love of that coworker after the fact. And I remind my team we have to love them before the fact to prevent the fact. And there is a great place for love in a workplace of any kind, but particularly in a high hazard workplace where the work that we do is hazardous but does not have to be dangerous. If we follow our standards, if we keep our procedures, and if we communicate with each other to keep each other safe. So I think there is a great presence of love in the workplace. People just don't recognize it. And they they have to be you know, we have to connect the dots.*

*[00:07:00] We have to love them before the fact to prevent the fact, you know, whether it's safety for our colleagues, our vendors, our customers or our communities, when we come from a place of service to others, a place of love for others, it elevates our responsibility for safety. And this really got me thinking about you Ops executives and ops leaders pursuing excellence.*

## Safety is a Team Sport | 124

What if each of us did an evaluation of how safety is positioned in our work, not just on the posters on the wall, but listening to our tiered meetings and huddles, listening to conversations between leaders and their teams, watching our morning stretches, reviewing our near miss actions and learning processes, and how we learn from near misses and seeing how we respond to incidents. How prevalent is servant leadership? Care for others? How prevalent is that in each of our cultures? In our underlying and shared beliefs, in our individual and collective behaviors and in our processes and systems. And then based on what you learn, what might you do? Why?

What do you expect to happen by taking that action or by doing that thing or by making that change? Safety is a team sport, my friends. And if you're like me, you have seen teams struggle to figure out how to make safety important. It becomes routine and rote and just a check the box activity. But what we want is we want safety to be real, meaningful beliefs, behaviors and systems that are integrated into who we are and how we do business.

[00:08:39] And so if you're a team or if you have teams in your organization who have struggled to figure out how to make safety a priority, this might be an interesting observation to do, to go out and listen and watch and observe and then reflect. Commissioner Kavanaugh session was short and impactful. We are going to put the whole video in our show notes so you can watch it for yourself, because this idea that safety is a team sport, that nothing is done alone is actually just the first of three principles that she shared.

So there are some other great nuggets in there to take away, and I would encourage you to watch it. You can head over to process plus results. Dot com forward slash podcast. This is episode number 124 from September of 2023. Now, in addition to that, in our show notes, you are also going to get a link to the Lean blog podcast where Mark Raybon, Katie Anderson, Jim Womack and I did our immediate onsite post-event reflection for the GE Lean mindset. So you can hear our conversation right after the event at a podcast episode that Mark posted on behalf of us. So we're going to put that link in there. Also going to put a link to a post about the books that were shared at the event. So GE bought a bunch of books from some different authors and gave those away at the event.

## Safety is a Team Sport | 124

[00:10:05] So we've got just a little bit of information if you're interested in seeing what books were recommended by Larry Culp and the team, then you're going to be able to see that at the link at our show notes as well. Now stay tuned for future episodes where I share more about Patti Poppe's idea of love in the workplace. And there's some stuff she shared that I just really loved it super resonated with me, but I'm kind of still noodling on it a little bit, so I'll share more about that.

You're going to hear from some additional conversations I'm having with Katie Anderson and Mark Raybon. And we're just going to dive in also to some of the tactical Lean stuff that was shared about playbooks and some of the specific details around Lean from a cultural standpoint as well as Lean from a mindset standpoint. And then I'll also talk about growth mindset.

So we've got a ton of stuff coming up in future episodes. Encourage you to stay tuned for those. Until then, you can head over to [processplusResults.com](http://processplusResults.com) find episode number 124 and watch Commissioner Kavanaugh's safety moment. You can reflect on what type of safety culture you and your leadership team are building and modeling and what's working well when it comes to safety in your organization and what might be better if. All right, that's it for now. Until next time.