



# Reflections: Lean in Higher Education

One Case: Observations from Outside Eyes  
(sort of)

# The problem: Silos of Trust

## Institutions

All want to serve their students well.

Are mission driven.

Have the best intentions.

## Context

A very hierarchical system.

Vice Presidents command their own ships.

“My ship is ship shape and everyone on my ship knows their place.”

## Problem statement

Students have to jump from ship to ship to get things done.

Crew members only do what they're told to do.

# Challenges for Lean Adoption

## Challenge 1: Culture

### **Empowerment**

You've always told me what to do, now you're telling me I can help decide what's best?

## Challenge 2: Culture

### **Trust**

I trust the people in my organization but I don't know about the ones over there.

## Challenge 3: Culture

### **No Blame, Really?**

You're telling me to stick my neck out and try experiments and you won't fire me when we have failures?

# Never Waste a Good Crisis

*Opportunities come in many  
forms!*

Our Crisis:

A leadership mandate that was failing and simultaneously driving the whole fleet nuts.

What is your crisis?

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# Lessons of Lean Adoption

## Challenge 1: Culture

### **Empowerment**

A focus on value for students

Value Stream Mapping Sessions

- Let's look at it from the student's perspective
- A3 solution teams

## Challenge 2: Culture

### **Trust**

Leadership TRUE willingness.

Small wins are frequently highlighted in face to face showcases.

## Challenge 3: Culture

### **No Blame, Really?**

VP's start to recognize the wisdom of the Gemba.

Failures are highlighted along with successes and applauded.

## Lean Creates Opportunities to:

- Improve the student experience\*\*\*
  - Live Mission values
  - Reduce Waste
  - Unleash the Power of our People