

An Innovative Approach to Developing Team Leaders

**Center for Comparative Medicine
Massachusetts General Hospital
Charlestown, MA**

American Association for Laboratory Animal Science
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November 10th, 2008

Mass General Hospital



- **Biomedical research at MGH**

- Total annual research budget = \$535M
- 80,000 sq ft of animal facilities in 9 different locations
- AAALAC accreditation since 1993
- 1000 active animal protocols; >350 PIs & 2000+ animal users
- Species: aquatics, rodents, rabbits, pigs, sheep, NHP's, misc.

- **Diverse Animal Models Used**

Alzheimer's Disease

Anesthesiology

Atherosclerosis

Behavioral Neuroscience

Bone Marrow Transplants

Burn Injury

Cancer

Congestive Heart Failure

Deafness

Diabetes Mellitus

Gene Therapy

Genomics

HIV/AIDS

Huntington's Disease

Inflammation

Laser Therapy

Limb & Nerve Regeneration

Obesity

Organ Transplants

Orthopedics

Plastic Surgery

Radiation Therapy

Renal Failure

Sepsis & Shock

Stem Cells

Stroke

Trauma

Ulcerative Colitis

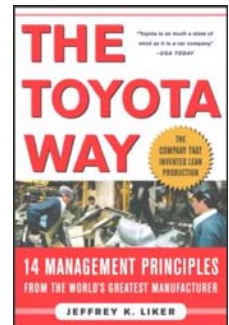
Vaccines

Vascular Surgery

Center for Comparative Medicine



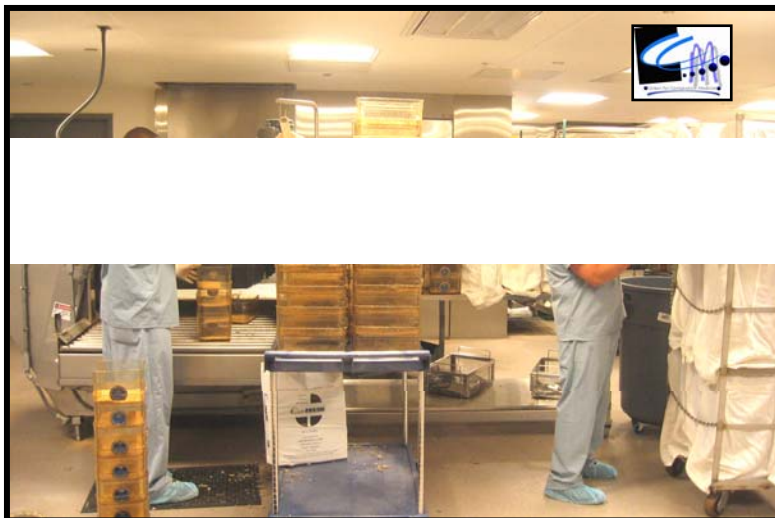
- **Infrastructure**
 - 6 animal facilities with ~60K sq ft of space; logistical support to 3 satellite facilities
- **Operations Framework (since 2005)**
 - “Lean” Management ; Adopted from Toyota Production Systems (TPS)
- **Workforce Organization: 110 FTEs**
 - 5 Sr. Mgmt Staff (Director, Assoc Director, Asst Directors)
 - 10 Administrative Staff (Procurement, Transportation, Billing, Workforce Development, Billing, IT, etc.)
 - 4 Clinical Veterinarians + 1 Physician (Health Affairs)
 - 10 Facility (6) and Program (4) Managers
 - **17 Team Leads**
 - **65 Research Animal Technicians/Specialists**
 - **Average Team Size = 3-5 RAS including Team Leads**



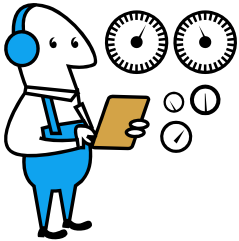
TPS Principle: *Develop Exceptional People and Teams*



- Work **groups are empowered** to:
 - Solve problems and improve processes within their scope of responsibility
- Lead by skilled **Team Leaders** that understand and expand the TPS philosophy
 - Understand the daily work in detail to continuously improve the processes
 - Build strong communication and interpersonal skills to support highly functional teams in accomplishing common goals



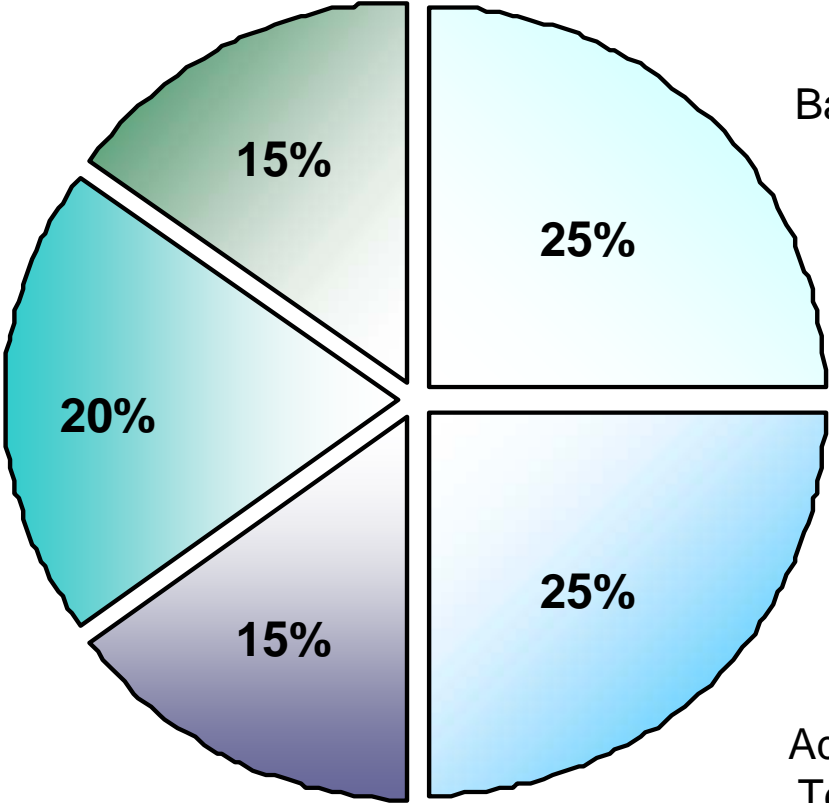
Responsibilities of Team Leader



Fill in for Absences

Basic Husbandry

Organizing & Scheduling Work



Advanced Husbandry /
Technical Procedures

Work on Continuous Improvement /
Problem Solving Processes



Team Leader Development Process

- Candidates are selected by facility managers:
 - ✓ RAS candidates with at least **6 months of experience** at CCM + ALAT
 - ✓ Are **dependable**
 - ✓ Provide **consistent quality work**
 - ✓ Take a **leadership** role on projects
 - ✓ Demonstrate **initiative** and **willingness to learn**
 - ✓ Maintain a **positive attitude**
 - ✓ Have strong **communication skills**
 - ✓ Look for ways to **improve** the facilities and **how things are done**
 - ✓ **Work well** with colleagues, supervisors and customers
 - ✓ Have the **respect of others** within the facility
- 3 months of training:
 - Didactic classes & workshops
 - 2 hours per session each week
 - Facility-based projects
- Classes are created led by managers and experienced team leaders

Emphasis on problem-solving at the **team** level

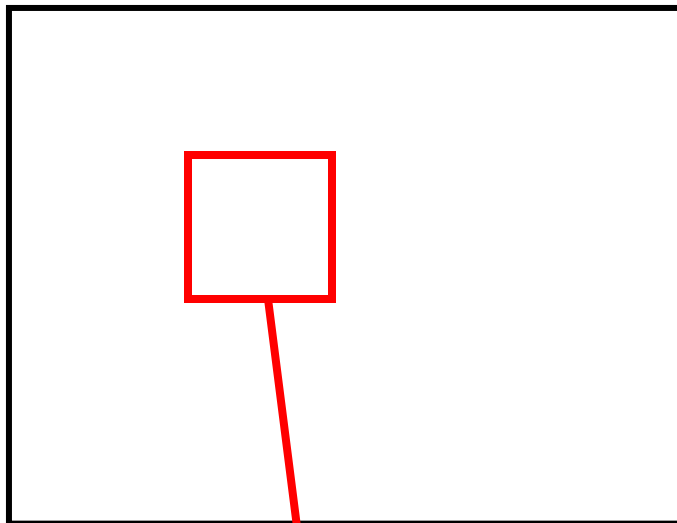


Summer/Fall 2008 Classes :

Class #	Topic
1	Team Leader Introduction and expectations
2	TPS Intro – The 14 Principles of Lean Management
3	“Jidoka” tools— smoothing out work flow and building in quality
4	Identifying “Muda” (waste) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Project—ID waste in a process
5	5 S’s & Visual Controls <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Project—TPS makeover of an area
6	Standardization & “Kaizen” (Continuous Improvement)

Team Leader Class Project—Using Visual Controls to Improve Workflow

VISUAL CONTROL PROJECT



BEFORE:
PPE STATION



AFTER:
PPE STATION



Team Leader Class Project—identifying waste in the facility

TPS Leader Training
Presentation

Muda :

Identifying & Eliminating Waste

Team A



Health Check Procedure

1. **Preparation**
 - Clean & Disinfect/Set up the hood
2. **Health Check**
 - Check an animal
3. **Report**
 - Record/Send e-mail
4. **Treat an animal**

Begin looking in each cage with
flashlight



Place the cage with the health
concern into the hood



Examine the sick animal



“MUDA”

Clean & disinfect the
hood

Get Health Check
Sheet and document
start time

Check sharps container

Check ventilated rack

Over-processing

Unnecessary movement

Begin looking in each
cage w/ flashlight

Flip the cage card
holder up when a
health concern is found

Place cage with the
health concern into the
hood

Examine the sick
animal

Unnecessary movement

Fill-out Health Check
Card and put in the
cage card holder

Write the health
concern in the Health
Check Log

Duplicate the Health
Check Log for
Technician's sheet

Document end time
and go to a computer
terminal

Over-processing

Over-processing

Unnecessary movement &
Over-processing

E-mail the contact
person, Vet. and the
facility manager



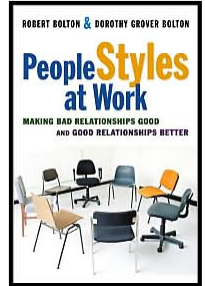
Developing Soft Skills

- Organizational, leadership, & soft skills are *learned* and honed

Class #	Topic
7	Communication skills—working in a team
8	Workflow Process & Value Stream Mapping
9	Mapping working group
10	Communication skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work styles & working with other teams within CCM
	Final Presentation

Understanding Team Dynamics

- Diversity is important to team composition
- By understanding a person's work style—it will help you communicate better

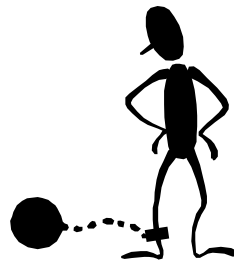


(People Styles at Work: Making Bad Relationships Good and Good Relationships Better—Bolton & Bolton)

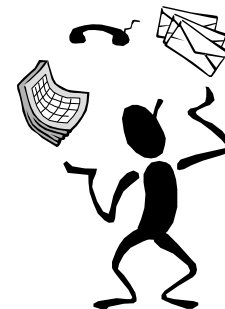
- Each work style makes valuable contributions in the work environment
 - This training helps identify generalized:



Strengths

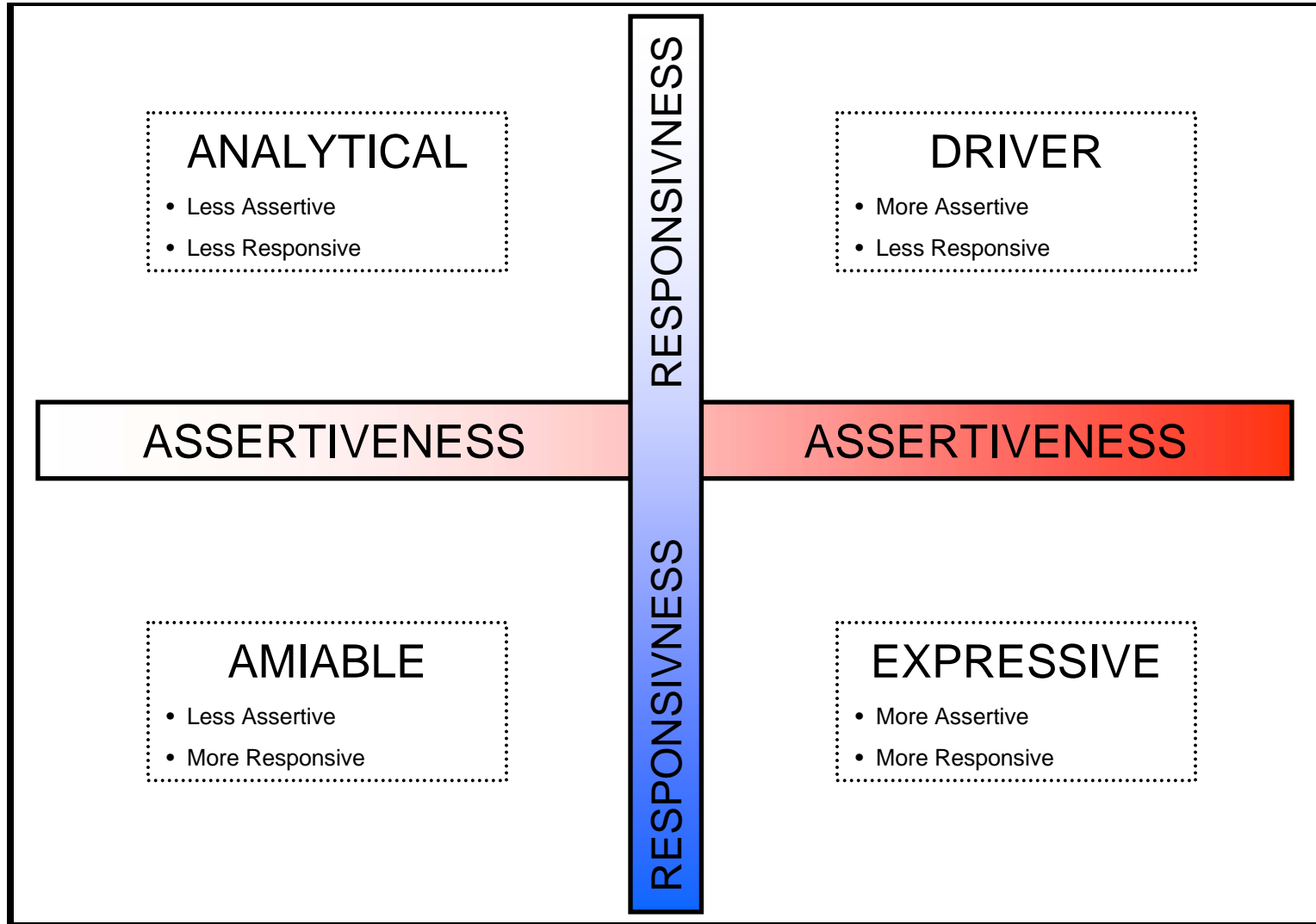


Challenges



Characteristics /
Tendencies

Work styles grid





Ten Week Residency

- After the first month of classes— candidates are placed in team leadership roles
- Coaching & support from:
 - Facility manager / permanent team lead
 - Team
 - Training manager
- Structured 360° feedback using peer review forms

3. Does this Team Lead give you comments and receive your comments in a professional way?

NAME (anonymous):
This Resident Team Lead is in training to become a Team Leader. Please be honest and specific in your responses to help develop their area of improvement.

Please answer Yes or No to the following questions:	Yes	No
1. Do you feel comfortable approaching this Team Lead to ask questions?		
2. Do you feel this Team Lead listens to all team members' ideas and concerns?		
3. Does this Team Lead give you comments and receive your comments in a professional way?		
4. Do you feel this Team Lead resolves conflicts or problems efficiently?		
5. Does this Team Lead share knowledge and skills with you so that you know how to complete your tasks?		
6. Does this Team Lead project a positive attitude?		
7. Does this Team Lead have knowledge of all aspects of the job?		
8. Does this Team Lead manage schedules and plan tasks well, even when staff are out sick?		
9. Does this Team Lead give you clear direction and follow-up on your assigned tasks?		
10. Does this Team Lead act as good role model by following CCM and MGH policies?		

11. Please list some of this Resident Team Lead's strengths:

9. Does this Team Lead give you clear direction and follow-up on your assigned tasks?

12. Please describe any areas where this Resident Team Lead needs to demonstrate further improvement:

13. If you were Team Lead, what would you want to do differently?

15. What would you do differently if you were the team leader?

Completion of TL Residency



- Candidates have an formal review with a pass / fail status
 - Formal graduation with certificate
 - \$0.50 hour a raise (independent of advanced AALAS certification)
 - Can now be eligible for any open TL positions
 - 17 TL positions in six CCM facilities
 - Currently we have 6 open positions and 7 candidates in training
- Continuous education
 - Monthly department-wide meetings for all team leaders
 - Continuous updates and workshops to improve skills
 - Participation in team leader continuous improvement process

From the Team Leaders' Perspective:

Successes:

- Someone to go to for help
- Work more efficiently
- More cohesive team atmosphere
- Learn from each other
- More motivation
- Better organization to week's work
- Individual staff take more responsibility
- Clearer goals & direction
- More positive attitude
- Better quality of work



Challenges:

- Covering absences
- Work style conflicts
- Competitiveness / Sharing resources between teams
- Too many directions
- Motivating some staff
- Too much responsibility
- Team “tunnel vision”
- Rely too much on one another





Results of Highly Functioning Teams

1. Process improvement:

- increase in quality (better compliance, veterinary care, attentiveness and response time)
- Increase in efficiency (staffing levels increased only 30% vs. 60% increase in mouse cage census)

2. Workforce development:

- strong internal pipeline for staff management positions (facilities, services)

3. Financial impacts:

- less individual overtime needed to cover absences, more non per-diem revenues

4. Customer service:

- more effective communication with research staff, faster response time to problems

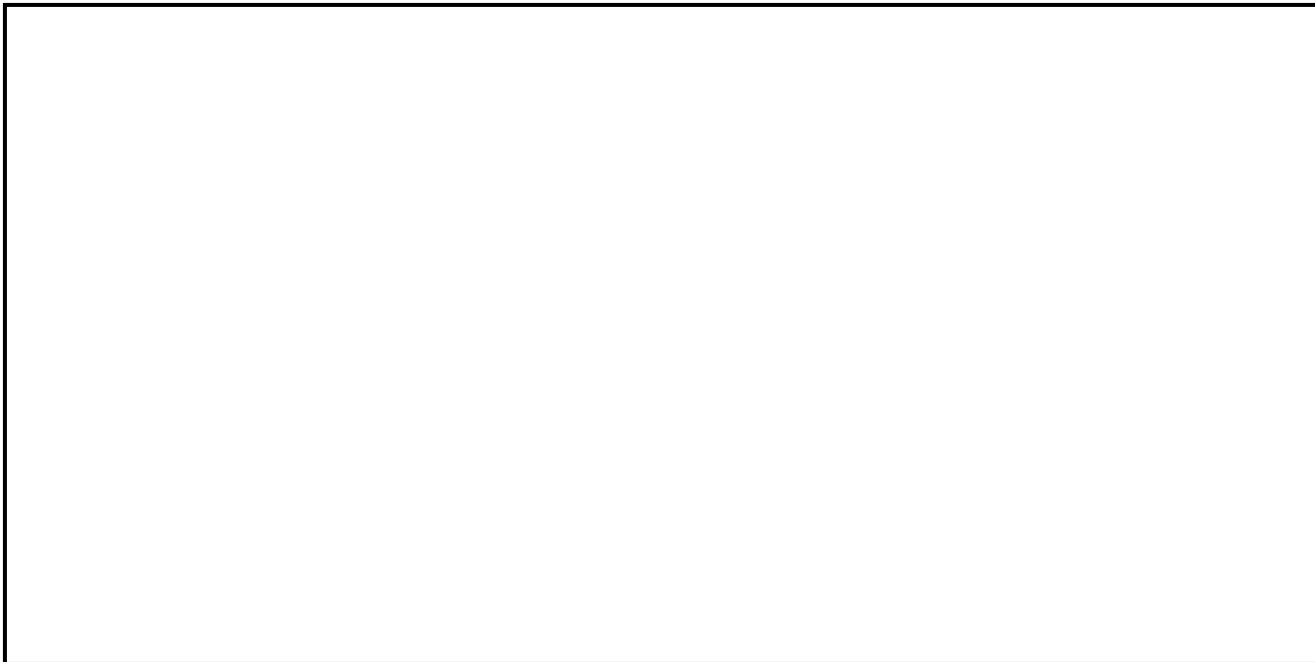
5. Employee morale:

- more responsibilities, expanded career path

Acknowledgements



- All of our CCM Facility Managers, Teams, & Team Leaders!



Questions?

