

2016 LEAN CONFERENCE AGENCY LEADER PANEL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Each year, at its annual Lean Transformation Conference, Results Washington records videos of key learning moments from some presenters. These short excerpts are intended as bite-sized learning and as a prompt for team discussions.

To get you started, we've summarized each clip with the following:

1. A question that came from the conference audience
2. A quote from an agency director
3. A discussion question for your team

Part 1: Employee Ideas are Essential

Audience question: Why are employee ideas so essential?

Quote: "Build the kind of culture in the agency where people are not afraid to bring their ideas forward." Rick Garza

Discussion question: How can I/we coach instead of direct to help encourage ideas?

Part 2: Encouraging Honest Feedback

Audience question: How do you handle the negative, while encouraging honest feedback?

Quote: "Leaders must personify humility, stop and listen to employee ideas." Rick Garza

Discussion question: How can I/we encourage honest, open employee dialogue and discussions?

Part 3: Listening to Employees

Audience question: How do you overcome fear and ensure ideas are listened to?

Quote: "Those hallway conversations with employees are so important, you have to stop in your tracks and listen." Chris Liu

Discussion question: How do we, as leaders, encourage reluctant employees to develop and then discuss their ideas?

Part 4: Ideas, Then What?

Audience question: How do I make my ideas heard?

Quote: "How often do we implement people's ideas and then forget to celebrate it with the staff?" Chris Liu

Discussion questions: How are we embracing employee ideas now? What can we do to inspire ideas in the future?

Part 5: Leadership

Audience question: Why are there so many top down leaders who don't walk the talk?

Quote: "It is not about doing lean events; instead, the question is what are those principled things you commit to doing each and every day that begin to make a difference." Joel Sacks

Discussion questions: What actions do I take as a leader to ensure employees are comfortable giving me feedback?

Part 6: Implementing Ideas

Audience question: How do we vet ideas for implementation? And how do we deal with bad ideas?"

Quote: "What's the problem we are trying to solve, do we agree on what is broken and what are we trying to fix?"
Joel Sacks

Discussion question: How do I/we help employees understand the real problem they are trying to solve? What key questions can I/we ask employees to coach them through arriving at the actual problem?

Part 7: Challenges in Lean Implementation

Audience question: What are the biggest challenges for agency leaders regarding Lean?

Quote: "The biggest challenge is building capacity so time is built into the day for employees to discuss ideas and solutions and get to the root cause." Alfie Alvarado-Ramos

Discussion question: What are the skills I/we possess that will help effectively lead employees through a transformation?