

# Lean Tips

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*The articles and knowledge tidbits  
about Lean Management and  
Quality Management were  
collected by me over the years. I  
hope that along with me, you will  
enjoy reading, practicing, and  
preaching them in your journey  
towards quality improvement.*

*Lean Tips source:  
<http://www.aleanjourney.com/>*

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## Great Things are done by a Series of Small Things Brought Together

In the spirit of doing better, the smallest ideas are likely to be the easiest to adopt and implement. These improvements are sometimes called Point or Mini Kaizen. Making one small change is both rewarding to the person making the change and if communicated to others can lead to a widespread adoption of the improvement and the possibility that someone will improve on what has already been improved. There's no telling what might occur if this were the everyday habit of all team members.

One of the most counter intuitive facts about small ideas is that they can actually provide a business with more sustainable competitive advantages than big ideas. The bigger the ideas, the more likely competitors will copy or counter them. If new ideas affect the company's products or services, they're directly visible and often widely advertised. And even if they involve behind-the-scenes improvements--say, to a major system or process--they're often copied just as quickly. That's because big, internal initiatives typically require outside sources, such as suppliers, contractors, and consultants, who sell their products and services to other companies, too. Small ideas, on the other hand, are much less likely to migrate to competitors--and even if they do, they're often too specific to be useful. Because most small ideas remain proprietary, large numbers of them can accumulate into a big, competitive advantage that is sustainable. That edge often means the difference between success and failure.

In a Lean enterprise a strategy of making small, incremental improvements every day, rather than trying to find a monumental improvement once or twice a year equates to a colossal competitive advantage over time and competitors cannot copy these compounded small improvements.

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## Personalize Tasks For Success.

Make sure the tasks you assign to each person play to their strengths. When people are set up for success, they are more motivated to achieve. Like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, nothing will get done if you have a big-picture person working on detail-rich tasks. Be clear with each person about how their work is vital to the outcome. Then set measurable goals and let them know how they will be held accountable. If appropriate, let the individuals take part in defining the work they will be undertaking.