Relational approach to process improvement

What is it?

- A relational approach to process improvement combines technical tools with relational tools
- Relational tools to build psych safety - then build shared goals, shared knowledge and mutual respect through high quality communication
- Technical tools can do the same when used in a relational way

What is it used for/ Purpose?

- Together technical and relational tools help workers to improve work processes and achieve their desired performance outcomes
Many technical approaches to process improvement

- Reengineering
- Total quality management
- Quality improvement
- Lean
- Six sigma
- Improvement science (IHI)
Addressing technical issues is necessary - but not sufficient

“We’ve been doing process improvement for several years, and we think we’re on the right track. But we’ve tried a number of tools for process improvement, and they just don’t address the relationship issues that are holding us back.”

- Bob Hendler, Tenet Healthcare Systems
Relational issues are part of process improvement

- Need multiple perspectives to solve systems problems
- Change may create loss and grief and therefore will require a relational response
- Successful change requires commitment, not just compliance, so shared goals are very helpful

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Relationships of shared goals, shared knowledge and mutual respect *create a culture that supports process improvement*

Relational coordination as the social pillar of lean