

Lean – But not as we know it – The Irish Experience

Richard Keegan

Ireland is a small country located on the Western edge of Europe. With a population of 4.5 million and separated from mainland Europe by two sea crossings. We have to work very hard to be able to sell our products and services into the European and global markets. Most of our companies are SMEs but we have some large companies too, both local and international, who are facing the challenges of improving competitiveness.

Keegan's presentation will describe the efforts being made to practically improve the competitiveness of Irish based business using a Lean approach, but a simple lean approach. He will describe how the Government has developed a national approach to improving our circumstances – the Action Plan for Jobs and how Lean has been incorporated into this national plan for four years and how this has developed over time.

His presentation will describe the “Why”, the How” and the “What” in terms of benefits achieved by the adoption of Lean at a National level. His presentation will end with some signposting to public domain resources on what we are doing in Ireland to drive SME competitiveness.

Richard Keegan is the manager of the Competitiveness Department of Enterprise Ireland, the national development agency for indigenous business in Ireland. He leads a team focused on helping SMEs improve their performance and competitiveness using Lean, Green and Benchmarking approaches. He is an Adjunct Professor with the Business School of Trinity College Dublin and has supported the World Class Manufacturing activities of the EU Japan centre for Industrial Co-Operation for nearly 20 years. He is an enthusiast for Lean and Competitiveness building and many of his books and writings are available free of charge, for society, on the internet. He likes motor-cycles!