

Mark Graban

Lean Leadership, Psychological Safety, and Continuous Improvement

Mark Graban is an internationally recognized consultant, published author, professional speaker, blogger, podcaster, and entrepreneur. His work draws on a deep education in engineering and management, combined with hands-on experience working with executives and frontline employees across multiple industries. Topics include Lean leadership, learning from mistakes, statistical thinking, and people-centered management.

The emphasis is on improvement that lasts. In healthcare, this means safer care, higher quality, and better work environments for clinicians and staff -- not short-term cost-cutting. Across industries, the focus is on leadership behaviors, daily improvement, and management systems that support learning, adaptability, and sustained performance.

Independent since 2010, Mark frequently partners with organizations and consulting teams on larger engagements. He also serves as a Senior Advisor to the software company KaiNexus.

Books and Publications

Three of Mark's books are recipients of the Shingo Publication Award: **The Mistakes That Make Us**, **Lean Hospitals**, and **Healthcare Kaizen**.

The Mistakes That Make Us: Cultivating a Culture of Learning and Innovation (2023) -- How leaders can build a culture where mistakes become opportunities for learning and improvement, drawing on examples from healthcare, technology, and manufacturing.

Measures of Success: React Less, Lead Better, Improve More -- Practical statistical methods to help leaders overreact less to metrics and focus on real, sustainable improvement.

Lean Hospitals: Improving Quality, Patient Safety, and Employee Engagement (3rd edition, 2016) -- The first healthcare book to win the Shingo Award. Translated into eight languages.

Healthcare Kaizen and **The Executive Guide to Healthcare Kaizen** -- Engaging front-line staff in sustainable continuous improvements.

Practicing Lean -- An anthology of reflections and lessons on change, growth, and Lean management from Mark and 15 other authors.

Education

Northwestern University: Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering (BSIE)

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT): Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering (MSME), Master of Business Administration (MBA). Fellow, MIT Sloan Leaders for Global Operations Program.

Experience

Previous roles include positions at General Motors, Dell, and Honeywell (certified Lean Expert). From 2005-2009, Mark was a senior consultant with ValuMetrix Services (a division of Johnson & Johnson), leading improvement projects in the U.S., Canada, and England. From 2009-2011, he served as a Senior Fellow with the Lean Enterprise Institute, directing communications and technology for the Healthcare Value Network.

Speaking and Teaching

Mark is a popular speaker at conferences and private company events across the U.S., Canada, and internationally (Finland, Holland, Sweden, Brazil, Japan, Thailand, China). He has guest lectured at MIT, Wharton, UT Health Science Center, and Ohio State University, and has served as faculty for the Lean Enterprise Institute, Catalysis, and Studer Group. He has been quoted in Health Affairs and the New York Times.

Podcasts and Online

Host of **My Favorite Mistake** and **Lean Blog Interviews** podcasts. Founder and lead blogger at **LeanBlog.org** (since 2005). Recognized as a LinkedIn Top Voice.

Honors

Diplomate member, Society for Health Systems. Board member, Louise H. Batz Patient Safety Foundation.