



## Lean Construction Institute

Building Knowledge in Design and Construction

The 20th annual meeting of International Group for Lean Construction, IGLC, is set for next week in San Diego. 225+ people have registered for the Industry Day next Tuesday and 125+ for the academic meeting that follows. 120 plus papers in 2.5 days brings great pressure on the management of each session. We are experimenting with a variety of presentation/discussion approaches. Expect rapid learning along with some surprises and hard feelings when the experiments don't work as planned. It will be a high-pressure week of tightly packed sessions coupled with the annual opportunity to meet (read "have a beer") with our international friends and colleagues. Please catch up with me if you attend the meeting.

It is easy for us in the US to miss the Lean Construction action in the rest of the world. I received a call last week from representatives from the construction community and lean manufacturing in Colombia. They are looking to develop an organization there – perhaps along the lines of LCI. It occurred to me that it might be possible to emulate the European Group for Lean Construction and create an association with representatives from the region. So I contacted colleagues in Latin America and it looks like we will hold a one or two-day meeting of reports from academics and practitioners on their experiences applying Lean Construction in projects from Mexico to the tip of South America. There have long been very significant efforts underway in Brazil, Chile and Peru (where IGLC met last year) and there are smaller but real initiatives in Mexico, Argentina and Costa Rica.

Back to our home turf: Vic Sanvido, Chairman of the LCI Board, led a solid Web/phone meeting this morning devoted to organizing LCI and its committee structure. There is so much to be done, an excess of opportunities. We're going to need help on a variety of fronts as we work to transform the construction industry.

I've spent some time this week working on a paper about a planning simulation, The Oops Game, developed by Prof. Michael Vorster and yours truly. It models the dilemma faced by everybody when planning: "Should I take action now with what I know and have or defer until I know more?" The simulation explores how we plan in the face of uncertainty and risk; "Have we planned enough?" This is a question we all answer in situation after situation as we think through how to meet an objective. How long before a flight do we leave for the airport? We can leave earlier and reduce the risk of missing the flight—a bi Oops—or leave later and count on short lines at security. Most of the time we make these choices simple and quick.

Prof. Min Liu and I have a short paper on the simulation for the IGLC meeting and are working on a more significant version for an academic journal. Everyone says planning is important; prescriptions for proper planning abound particularly for "preplanning" (is there any other kind). Here I am thinking of planning for action and the easiest examples are those choices made near to action. And yet neither Prof. Liu nor I can find a reference to research or heuristics on how we make this essential choice. We believe there must be a relationship between the quality and amount of planning and project results. Too little planning surely increases risk and decreases project performance. And too much would increase cost with no benefit. What is the cost-benefit ratio of additional planning on construction projects?" Or as the CII recently asked, "How much planning is enough?" We do have solid evidence that the amount of effort required by the Last Planner® system more than pays for itself at the project level. So...does anyone have information, data, opinion or thought on the relationship between the effort involved in planning and outcomes? Please let me know.



## Links to visit:

An article on the Saint Peter's project in Saint Louis

[http://www.slccc.net/documents\\_pdf/BJCStPetersPatient&Pharmacy0911.pdf](http://www.slccc.net/documents_pdf/BJCStPetersPatient&Pharmacy0911.pdf)

One from ENR on the changing approach to project delivery at UCSF

<https://enr.construction.com/engineering/subscription/LoginSubscribe.aspx?cid=23240>

From Joseph Dager an interview with me and another with Glenn Ballard.

<http://business901.com/blog1/the-pull-in-lean-constructiongreg-howell/>

I also did an excerpt on my blog Sunday with a video of Glenn discussing Lean Construction.

<http://business901.com/blog1/lean-planning-we-started-off-looking-at-work/>

João Petrocelle Carvalheiro from the Project Management Institute in Brasil interviewed me after reading a paper I co-authored with Lauri Koskela "The Underlying Theory of Project Management is Obsolete."

[http://usir.salford.ac.uk/9400/1/2002\\_The\\_underlying\\_theory\\_of\\_project\\_management\\_is\\_obsolete.pdf](http://usir.salford.ac.uk/9400/1/2002_The_underlying_theory_of_project_management_is_obsolete.pdf)

João has since written an article and sent it to 22,000 subscribers. He promises me a translation.

<http://www.pmis.org.br/enews/edicao1206/tendencias.asp>

An unexpected but great fun folly from the NASA site:

<http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/ap120710.html>