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The Job Shop Lean 2026 Conference

Proven solutions for every high-mix low-volume (HMLV) manufacturer

August 17, 2026

TIME	TOPIC
7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	• REGISTRATION • BREAKFAST • NETWORKING
What is Job Shop Lean?	
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	(Shahrukh Irani) Challenges that Job Shops Have Not Overcome After 100+ Years
Overview of this presentation: There are significant reasons why the Toyota Production System should not be implemented by any job shop. Those reasons inspired the development of Job Shop Lean. Any Toyota assembly facility is a low-mix high-volume manufacturing facility that only needs to be Focused <u>and</u> Efficient. In contrast, any job shop is a high-mix low-volume manufacturing facility that needs to be Focused <u>and</u> Efficient <u>and</u> Flexible <u>and</u> Agile. Each of the four capabilities that are key to any job shop's success is briefly described below: 1. Focus is the ability to produce a low variety of products usually a product family. 2. Efficiency is the ability to be fast, cost-effective and frugal when making any product. 3. Flexibility is the ability to make a variety of products. 4. Agility is the speed with which changes can be made to produce a variety of products). Unfortunately, these capabilities are in direct conflict with each other. So, a job shop will need to compromise and determine how much they wish to invest in each of the four capabilities (Focus, Efficiency, Flexibility and Agility). This presentation will re-imagine the job shop of the future. It will give an overview of how Job Shop Lean has adopted, adapted and extended the Principles of Lean (Read Me) to help any job shop achieve that elusive balance between. Any job shop that seeks to implement Job Shop Lean needs to “first and foremost line up these ducks” --- (1) Metrics, (2) Product Mix (and Customer Base), (3) Shop Layout, (4) Production Planning & Control, (5) Shop Scheduling, (6) Communications between the Top Floor and the Shop Floor and (7) Employee Training, Development and Career Growth	
Relevant Information for this Presentation	
1. (Read Me) Principles of Lean 2. (Listen To Me) Why the Toyota Production System is Unsuitable for Job Shops 3. (Listen To Me) Overview of Lean Manufacturing 4. (Listen To Me) Essential Foundation for Job Shop Lean 5. (Listen To Me) Online Lectures on my YouTube Channel	
Implementing Job Shop Lean in a Machine Shop	
8:30 – 10:00 a.m.	(Ryan McCauley and Ashley Wissmann) Ongoing Implementation of Job Shop Lean at a US Navy Supplier
Overview of this presentation: This presentation will describe the details of (and lessons learned from) the ongoing implementation of Job Shop Lean at ODAT Machine. Being a US Navy supplier, ODAT Machine is easily and obviously a high-mix low-volume manufacturer that needs/wants to improve shop floor management, increase business profitability and eliminate the wastes that cause margin losses! First, the implementation of Job Shop Lean at ODAT Machine began on 5/1/2026 when their VP of Operations answered all the questions in the JSLAT (Job Shop Lean Assessment Tool). His answers helped to determine (i) a single top-down strategic project to transform the current shop layout into a network of stand-alone machining cells and (ii) many bottom-up improvement projects that the employees in each cell would do, including employee training, before their cell goes live. Next, the PFAST Input File for ODAT Machine's product mix consisting of approximately 600 different P/Ns (Part Numbers) was analyzed using PFAST. Analysis of the outputs in the PFAST Analysis Report reinforced the conclusions drawn from the	

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JSLAT. **Finally**, a 4-day onsite kaizen was conducted from 5/26/2026 to 5/29/2026 to develop a strategy to implement Job Shop Lean at ODAT Machine. At the completion of this visit, a Plan Of Work was submitted to the management of ODAT Machine. Management has opted for a cautious Plan⇒Implement⇒Learn⇒Expand approach to transform their shop floor into a Cellular Layout one-cell-at-a-time. This presentation will describe the ongoing implementation of the Sea Wolf Cell (SWC) which will include the two new HaaS CNC Lathes that were recently purchased.

Relevant Information for this Presentation

1. ([Listen To Me](#)) A Viable Approach to Cellular Manufacturing for High-Mix Low-Volume Manufacturers
2. ([Listen To Me](#)) Job Shop Lean: Lean in High-Mix Low-Volume Production
3. ([Read Me](#)) 10 Lean Manufacturing Ideas for Job Shops
4. ([Read Me](#)) In a Machine Shop, The Labor of Lean is Data-Driven
5. ([Read Me](#)) The Job Shop Lean Guidebook for High-Mix Low-Volume (HMLV) Manufacturers

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.

- BREAK
- NETWORKING
- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS

10:30 a.m. – Noon

([Shahrukh Irani](#)) Assess the Current State of Your Job Shop Right Now!

Overview of this session: This session will allow each attendee to assess the Current State of their job shop using the Job Shop Lean Assessment Tool (JSLAT). The JSLAT is a questionnaire that consists of several sets of questions to assess the Current State of key aspects of a job shop's operations such as Product Mix, Factory Layout, Production Planning and Scheduling, Management Involvement, Employee Engagement, etc. Each question requires only a Yes/No response. The format of the session will be as follows: (1) A question will be announced, (2) Attendees will check either the Yes or No box for that question on their copy of the JSLAT, (3) The ideal/desired answer (Yes or No) for that question will be provided with supporting justification and (4) If any member of the audience seeks further elaboration regarding that question, it will be provided not just by the speaker but also by members of the audience.

Relevant Information for this Presentation

1. ([Read Me](#)) Is Job Shop Lean Right for You?

Noon – 1:00 p.m.

- LUNCH
- NETWORKING
- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS

Keys to Successful Management and Growth of a Job Shop

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.

([Jyot Bawa](#)) Change Management in a Lower Mid-Market Aerospace and Defense Manufacturing Job Shop

Overview of this presentation: L. A. Gauge Company is a family-owned and led aerospace and defense manufacturer specializing in ultra-precision machining of exotic materials and electro-optics. The presenter, who is the President and co-owner of the company, will present a candid case study on how a family-owned and led job shop professionalized its management team. He will discuss leadership decisions, structural changes and cultural resistance encountered during a significant management transition. Additional topics of discussion are executive discipline, accountability and long-term strategic clarity that repositioned the company for scalable growth.

1:30 – 2:00 p.m.

([Ryan McCauley](#)) Enabling Growth in a High-Mix, Low-Volume Precision Machine Shop

Overview of this presentation: This presentation will discuss how Job Shop Lean is enabling the growth of a high-mix, low-volume precision machine shop by having it utilize only one performance metric to drive all management decisions and actions --- THROUGHPUT. Specific examples of practices that we have implemented at [ODAT Machine](#) will be presented.

2:00 – 2:30 p.m.

([Anirban Banerjee](#)) Operational Excellence as a Path to Improve Financial Performance

Overview of this presentation: The Rig Technology Business of NOV (National Oilwell Varco) has had challenges with regards to improving working capital, profitability and customer OTD (On Time Delivery). NOV's Operational Excellence team has worked on a number of initiatives to improve these key KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). The presentation will focus on the journey, the challenges, the results achieved as well as the path forward.

2:30 – 3:00 p.m.

- BREAK
- NETWORKING
- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS

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3:00 – 3:30 p.m. (Dan Oliver) Who Said Company Turnarounds Are Easy?

Overview of this presentation: This presentation will offer a raw and practical look at what it truly takes to restore performance, accountability, and momentum inside a manufacturing organization. Turning around a struggling operation is rarely neat, quick, or comfortable. In this candid presentation, the speaker shares the realities of rebuilding a manufacturing organization after making a difficult leadership change that had been delayed far too long. The journey that followed required cleaning house, hiring dozens of employees in a matter of months, establishing new operating standards across departments, sustaining thousands of hours of overtime, and implementing new software systems — all while keeping production running. The speaker will reflect on the hard lessons of leadership during a turnaround that this experience taught him --- the hidden cost of delaying tough decisions, the discipline required to rebuild a winning culture, the urgency of rebuilding teams quickly, and the necessity of pushing forward with operational improvements even in the middle of chaos.

3:30 – 4:00 p.m. (Lance Thraikill) Leveraging AI and Automation to Maximize ROI on Capex Investments in a Custom Fabrication Shop

Overview of this presentation: This presentation will tell the story of All Metals Fabricating, a three-generation company with more than 70 years in business, and its evolution from a small sheet metal shop into a technology-forward custom fabrication operation. Grounded in the realities of a high-mix, low-volume job shop environment, the session will explore how the company has strategically leveraged AI and automation — not as buzzwords, but as practical tools — to drive growth, improve throughput, and maximize ROI on major equipment investments. The speaker, who is their current CEO, will show real-world applications including machine monitoring systems that expose hidden downtime, digital scheduling tools that replace tribal knowledge with data-driven prioritization, automated quoting platforms that compress lead times, and employee performance dashboards that align shop-floor execution with business objectives. Most importantly, the speaker will candidly share what worked, what failed, and what the next phase of digital transformation looks like — a grounded roadmap for job shops seeking to modernize without losing the craftsmanship and culture that built their success.

Relevant Information for this Presentation

(Read Me) 2026 Outlook: What We Expect for Our Shop and the Manufacturing Industry

4:00 – 4:30 p.m. (Shahrukh Irani) SMART CHART: An AI Assistant to Teach Waste Elimination to Employees [Part 1 of 2]

Overview of this presentation: Are you a job shop owner who desires to know all the NVA (Non-Value Added) activities that cause Margin Erosion (i) on each and every job in each that you produce and ship to customers and (ii) each every shift that you work in any year? If yes, then the best solution to that problem is also a simple solution --- teach and train every employee to think like an Industrial Engineer who constantly seeks opportunities to improve productivity, ergonomics and efficiency at their machine (or any other area in the shop). An Industrial Engineer uses TMS (Time and Motion Studies) aka MTM (Methods and Time Measurement) to observe, document, analyze and improve a work process (or system). In contrast, a shop floor employee uses their “maker mindset”, work experience, power of observation (Go See, Stand on the X, Waste Walks) to observe and improve a work process (or system). Notice that both individuals share a common goal --- to identify and eliminate the Eight Forms of Waste (TIMWOODS). By eliminating waste, the employee impacts their Benefits (and Bonus too), Margin Erosion, On Time Delivery, Workplace Safety & Ergonomics, etc. *This presentation will introduce a classical IE tool --- Flow Process Chart (FPC) --- that any employee can learn to use to record, cost and report the Seven Forms of Waste (TIMWOOD) that he/she observes in their daily work. This chart is the heart-and-soul for implementing a detailed approach to improve any work system, be it work being done at a single machine or in the entire factory. This chart is ideal for waste elimination because (1) it uses only seven activity symbols --- O, ⇨, ⚙, □, ▽, D, ◇ --- to describe any of the tasks that constitute a macro-level work process (or system) and (2) these symbols can be associated with one or more of the Eight Forms of Waste!* Starting with the FPC, the approach guides the employee to develop additional charts (such as Flow Diagram, Pareto Analysis, Impact vs. Effort Matrix, Man-Machine Chart, Gantt Chart) in order to “flesh out” and prioritize the opportunities *he/she* discovers to improve *his/her* daily work by eliminating waste ([Link](#)). For the sake of simplicity, ToPS (**T**oast **P**roduction **S**ystem ([Toast Kaizen](#)) has been used as the work process/system to explain the step-by-step execution of the approach for waste identification and elimination that could be taught to all employees. 😊😊😊

Relevant Information for this Presentation

1. Please see Appendix 4 **Education, Training and Development of Job Shop Employees.**

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2. === This paper argues against hiring a full-time IE === ([Read Me](#)) Krafcik, John F. (1988, Fall). *Triumph of the Lean Production System*. Sloan Management Review, Volume 30, Number 1, 41-52. 
3. === This paper argues for hiring a full-time IE === ([Read Me](#)) Heston, Tim. (2026, March). *Lean, Flexible, Profitable --- How a Pipe Fabricator Doubled Monthly Revenue*. The Fabricator, 54-56.

4:30 – 5:00 p.m.

([Eric Danziger](#), [Frederick Gertz](#) and [Shahrukh Irani](#)) SMART CHART: An AI Assistant to Teach Waste Elimination to Employees [Part 1 of 2]

Overview of this presentation: This presentation will discuss SMART CHART, an app that leverages AI to assist a motivated employee to think like an Industrial Engineer and seek opportunities to improve the productivity, ergonomics and efficiency for any process (or system) that hinders their daily work routine. The app works as follows:

1. It uses a combination of AI-assisted video analysis, voice-directed augmentation and manual input to help the employee to develop the Flow Process Chart for their work process (or system). Recall that the Flow Process Chart (FPC) describes any macro-level work process (or system) using only seven activity symbols --- O, ⇌, , □, ▽, D, ◇.
2. Next it uses AI to leverage its IE expertise gained from a curated library of literature on Work Study, Operations Analysis and Methods Engineering to identify all the opportunities to improve the work process (or system).
3. Next it develops a suitable Operations Research model that represents the work process (or system) under study. The solution of the OR model guides the employee to prioritize improvement opportunities in order of decreasing priority based on their impact on the standard SQDC (Safety, Delivery, Quality, Cost) metrics.

NOTE: The app being can be used by an individual employee, an individual employee working with the in-house Industrial Engineer or a team of employees doing a kaizen event.

5:00 p.m.

- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
- NETWORKING
- ADJOURNMENT

¹ Quoting from (Krafcik, 1988) "... An anecdote sheds some light on just how remarkable this shift in span of worker control can seem to a manager trained in the Fordist school, NUMMI, the GM-Toyota joint venture, is often used by General Motors to give employees an opportunity to see how the Toyota Production System (TPS) works. One GM IE (Industrial Engineering) manager, intent on discovering the real secret of the plant's superb productivity and quality record, asked a high-ranking NUMMI executive (actually a Toyota executive on loan to the joint venture) how many Industrial Engineers worked at NUMMI. The executive thought for a while and replied. "We have 2,100 team members working on the factory floor; therefore we have 2,100 Industrial Engineers." The GM IE manager could only walk away, shaking his head (because) his entire staff of Industrial Engineers would be largely redundant in a TPS plant ..."

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Proven solutions for every high-mix low-volume (HMLV) manufacturer

August 18, 2026

TIME	TOPIC
7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	• BREAKFAST • NETWORKING • ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
Employee-Centric Management	
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	(Jyot Bawa) Running on EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) in an AS9100-certified Precision Machine Shop
Overview of this presentation: L. A. Gauge Company is a family-owned and led aerospace and defense manufacturing machine shop specializing in ultra-precision machining of exotic materials and electro-optics. The presenter, who is the President and co-owner of the company, will discuss (1) how the company uses EOS to support its AS9100 compliance and (2) how to resolve tensions between the two systems.	
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	(Neville Divecha) Beyond the Blueprint: How Management and Employees Can <i>Together</i> Build a Culture of Continuous Improvement
Overview of this presentation: Most scrap, rework, expediting, and customer complaints in a job shop do not begin at the machine — they begin at the blueprint. When machinists repeatedly encounter ambiguous tolerances, missing datums, unstable revision control, and unrealistic surface finish or stack-up requirements, the question is not whether mistakes will occur, but whether the organization has built the trust and structure to surface those risks early. This session challenges CEOs and senior leaders to rethink “employee-centric management” as a competitive manufacturing strategy: empowering machinists to question prints, escalate manufacturability concerns, and participate in disciplined design-for-manufacturability reviews before chips are cut. Drawing on Covey’s trust principles and Toyota’s Respect for Humans philosophy, this presentation will show how aligning authority with expertise on the shop floor reduces scrap, protects margins, improves first-pass yield, and converts blueprint chaos into institutional learning.	
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	(Mark Blakely) Custom Product Fabricator’s Lean Journey Prepared Them for their Automation Journey
Overview of this presentation: Flextur Inc. took the correct route to automation by rationalizing and simplifying their Make-To-Order custom fabrication job shop, putting employees first and implementing manual welding and assembly cells before advancing to adoption of cobots and other forms of automation. They did not fall for the “gimme that shiny toy” or “oh yeah, AI is going to solve my problems” mindset that is widespread among high-mix low-volume manufacturers. Flextur invested in their people to drive rationalization, simplification and standardization of their manufacturing processes before they embraced automation. Quoting Bill Gates about adoption of business technology and automation, “ <i>The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency.</i> ”	
Relevant Information for this Presentation	
(Read Me) Optimized Cobot Welding Cell Design: How the Full Footprint Drives Throughput	
9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	(James Cheatham) Culture Does Not Lead, It Follows: Making Employee-Centric Management Work in Discrete Manufacturing

Overview of this presentation: Employee-centric management works in discrete manufacturing, but only when the standard for performance comes first before culture. Culture follows *from* the standard for performance and not the other way around. In discrete manufacturing, there is a pendulum swinging between founder-centric management and employee-centric management. If management spends too much time at either extreme then their business pays for that incorrect over-investment of their time! The real tension is not about which approach to management is right, but how the owner of any SME (Small Manufacturing Enterprise) balances the pressure to produce with the need to retain the people doing the producing. This presentation will draw on the speaker's direct experience across both types of organizations to examine the genuine advantages that employee-centric management can deliver, the dynamics that quietly undermine it, and why company growth is the point where most cultures come apart. This presentation will teach concrete tools to any conference attendee seeking practical advice that they can apply immediately in their place of work.

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.	• BREAK • NETWORKING • ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
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10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	(Ryan McCauley) Employee-Centric Management in an ESOP Manufacturing Environment
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Overview of this presentation: This presentation will discuss how an ESOP structure can support employee involvement in operational improvements. Topics will include defining roles in workplace changes, incorporating employee input into workstation and layout decisions, and maintaining alignment with overall production flow. Examples from Howell Laboratories, Inc.'s Assembly Department will be referenced.

11:00 – 11:30 a.m.	(Sultan Ahmed Mohammed) People First, Process Second: Leading Lean in High-Mix Low-Volume (HMLV) Manufacturing
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Overview of this presentation: Custom pipe fabrication job shops operate with constant variability that demands that they use many other tools in addition to the standard Lean tools derived from the Toyota Production System. In this presentation, the speaker will share his experience leading the Lean transformation of a custom pipe fabrication facility in Houston, TX, *where with the same 15-person workforce*, they doubled monthly revenue earnings from \$600, 000 per month to \$1.2 million per month. He will explain how these stellar results were obtained by (1) using Value Network Mapping (an alternative to Value Stream Mapping) to plan the roadmap for improvement projects, (2) implementing technical improvements like re-layout of the factory into two focused factories and (3) people-centered leadership which was key to earning the trust of the 15-person work force. His success *clearly* demonstrates that an Industrial Engineer can drive meaningful operational change in high-mix, low-volume environments by combining technical rigor with the people skills essential to drive a cultural transformation.

11:30 a.m. – Noon	(Frederick Gertz and Shahrukh Irani) Learn Job Shop Lean from an AI Chatbot
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Overview of this session: *Digital Dr. Irani*™ ([Link](#)) is a chatbot being developed by Collide Technology on CoDoc, their AI-powered knowledge management system ([Link](#)). The premise is simple --- nobody who wants to learn Job Shop Lean should be limited by the price of a book, by geography, or by whether they can get time with the individual who pioneered the manufacturing strategy. The impact is immediate --- any and every employee in any job shop, regardless of title, ought to be able to learn the concepts, practices, soft skills, software know-how, etc. needed to implement Job Shop Lean! The goal is audacious --- to spare Job Shop Lean the fate of so much pioneering work done in the 19th Century by the Gilbreths, Mogensen, Niebel, Gallagher & Knight, Burbidge, Opitz, Arn (and many others) that was never disseminated for public consumption as widely as it should have been. Nearly four decades of work spanning 1984 to 2026 — books, e-books, case studies, blogs, YouTube videos, undergraduate and graduate lecture notes, conference presentations, Quick-Read Guides, client reports, and more — is “housed” in a single curated digital library that the chatbot draws on to answer questions on Job Shop Lean (and the Industrial Engineering that underpins it). **This library is only the starting point!** The Job Shop Lean 2026 Conference has brought together a team of consultants, academics, job shop owners and industry practitioners who will contribute their own content and correct the chatbot's weak answers, whereby the knowledge base on Job Shop Lean will keep expanding and the chatbot's answers will keep sharpening over time. This presentation will be a live demonstration of Digital Dr. Irani answering questions from the audience in real time.

Noon – 1:00 p.m.	• LUNCH • NETWORKING • ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
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Putting Job Shop Lean to Work at McWane Plant & Industrial Inc.

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	(Henry Weissenborn) Establishing and Sustaining an Industry-University Partnership
Overview of this presentation: It took just an email from a Director of Operations to establish a thriving partnership between McWane Plant & Industrial Inc., Houston, TX, (MPI-HOUSTON) and the Department of Industrial & Systems Engineering at the University of Houston. The presentation will discuss how a Senior Manufacturing Engineer, IE interns working full-time on-site and student teams doing their industry projects in two courses --- INDE6378 and INDE6377 --- have made this partnership a success, despite the usual hiccups, glitches, doubts and questions.	
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	(Darin Alley) Common Sense Keys to Effective Leadership
Overview of this presentation: The presentation will discuss core elements of a successful manufacturing strategy that is pursued in this order --- Grow Revenue ⇒ Eliminate Waste ⇒ Respect and Reward Your Employees --- with guaranteed results.	
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.	(Sultan Ahmed Mohammed) Maximizing Profit through Data-driven Selection (or Rejection) of Orders to Utilize Freed-Up Shop Capacity
Overview of this presentation: This presentation will discuss the development of an innovative simulation and predictive analytics tool that transformed how a custom pipe fabricator, McWane Plant & Industrial Inc. (MPI-HOUS), accepts/rejects orders to release into production. This real-world application of Data Science has given MPI-HOUS a structured and reliable tool for forecasting the production volumes necessary to meet monthly revenue objectives by selective acceptance/rejection of orders received both from their customers and from sister facilities that have not implemented Job Shop Lean. Other aspects of the project that will be discussed are (i).the project plan for the Capstone Project done by a team of graduate students from the MS Program in Statistics and Data Science at the University of Houston, (ii) selection of KPI's to measure business outcomes, (iii) challenges of ensuring that “clean and complete” operational data was submitted to the predictive analytics tool and (iv) lessons learned from this real-world application of Data Science.	
2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	• BREAK • NETWORKING • ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.	(Sultan Ahmed Mohammed) A Complete Lean Transformation Playbook for Scaling Operations in a Custom Fabrication Shop
Overview of this presentation: This presentation will walk the audience through the speaker’s journey of transforming a custom pipe fabrication shop to achieve revenue growth from \$600,000 per month to between \$ 1 million to \$1.2 million per month over 16 months from mid-2024 to early-2026. The changes implemented range from specific daily actions to the comprehensive re-design of the operational management of the facility. All the operational changes were implemented in a planned sequence, from the scheduling logic to the layout changes to the complete re-structuring of the entire manufacturing floor into two focused factories that each produced a different segment of the product mix. The presenter will share his reflections on (1) what worked as planned and (2) what did not work as planned. It is hoped that this presentation will provide each member of the audience a complete blueprint for sustaining revenue-driven improvements in their own high-mix low-volume (HMLV) manufacturing facility. Finally, it should be noted that all this work was done while navigating real-world obstacles and trade-offs in partnership with students and faculty from two departments at the University of Houston --- (1) Industrial & Systems Engineering and (2) Statistics and Data Science.	
4:30 – 5:00 p.m.	(Amir Etezazi and Hessam Vali) Beyond the Machines: Building a People-Centric Job Shop That Thrives
Overview of this presentation: Job shops invest heavily in machines, tooling, software, automation. Yet, in high-mix, low-volume manufacturing facilities, it is invariably people who sequence orders for release into production, detect the non-conforming pieces in a batch, fine tune the setup on a multi-million dollar machine, rescue the schedule every time it gets disrupted in a single shift, etc. And when those critical decisions and informed actions live only in the heads of a few veterans, every retirement, resignation, or sick day becomes an operational risk. This presentation makes the case that it is a good investment to pursue the creation of a people-centric job shop as part of a competitive manufacturing strategy. The presentation will cover topics such as: 1. Escaping the tribal knowledge trap by converting experience into living standard work 2. Using cross-training as a capacity planning tool rather than a checkbox for HR 3. Accelerating on-boarding in a shrinking skilled-trades pipeline, 4. Building a culture that engages shop floor employees (who are easily the shop's earliest sensors of delays and defects) to speak up when they have genuine reasons to do so. 5. Seeing clearly where technology is providing the tools that push knowledge to the operator to make their work easier instead of implementing tools that are perceived as surveillance. Attendees will leave with a practical framework for auditing their shop's people-related risk factors and treating workforce development with the same rigor as preventive maintenance. That is because, when the employees are not playing their A game, the shop will surely do poorly on key KPIs --- lead time, first-pass yield, on-time delivery.	

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5:00 p.m.

- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
- NETWORKING
- ADJOURNMENT

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Proven solutions for every high-mix low-volume (HMLV) manufacturer

August 19, 2026

TIME	TOPIC
7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	- BREAKFAST - NETWORKING - ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
Discipline + Data + Data Analysis + Decision-Maker = Decisions	
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	(Hessam Vali) Closing the Reality Gap: Rethinking Lean for Data-Driven Job Shops Overview of this presentation: Most job shop owners rely on their ERP system for the decisions that determine whether jobs are defect-free and can ship on time. These decisions made by many departments such as Production Planning and Control, Shipping, Purchasing, Quality, Supplier Management, etc. have to be correct and timely! The challenge is that an ERP system only knows the information that has been entered into it by people in the front office and those on the shop floor. In reality, a meaningful share of that information never is entered correct, complete and in-time into the ERP system. Some of it arrives late or is reconstructed from memory at the end of a shift. Some of it remains on a paper traveler, in an informal verbal hand-off between operators, or in rework performed without a documented Non-Conformance Report. Basically, the ERP has no visibility into unavailable information. So? It reports based on a hypothetical status of the shop floor regardless of what actually happened. This unwarranted confidence is where the real operational risk lies! The result is a persistent gap between what the system reports and what the floor is experiencing — this gap undermines and invalidates Job Shop Lean tools which depend on that same data being accurate such as Finite Capacity Scheduling, Location and Sizing of Time Buffers, Work Order Release, Priority-based Queue Management, etc. This presentation examines why this gap is very common in HMLV production environments and makes the case that closing it depends on improving the speed of collecting complete and accurate shop floor data, instead of blindly ERP or blaming Lean. Attendees will leave with a clearer view of where their own ERP data breaks down, how that breakdown translates into late shipments and quality escapes, and how the right combination of shop floor process and technology, including use of an MES (Manufacturing Execution System), can close the gap rather than mask it.
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	(Pranav Srihari and Leo Jiang) Good Data Is Not Clean Data, Good Data is Operationally True Data Overview of this presentation: No job shop has the problem that it lacks data. It has numerous sources of data such as their ERP system, the spreadsheets that their employees develop and use to “get around” their ERP system, the machine utilization logs from their machine monitoring system, their machine maintenance logs, their POs (purchase orders), their job travelers, their history of transactions with customers, etc. Instead, the job shop’s problem is that these sources frequently disagree with one another and no longer reflect how work actually flows through the facility. This presentation examines the data failures that quietly undermine planning, quoting, scheduling, purchasing and, last but not the least, all AI initiatives --- Incomplete BOMs, outdated routings, invalid machine assignments for one or more operations in most routings, unreliable labor standards, incorrect parameters for inventory replenishment, and worst of all, missing execution data. It will show how manufacturers can overcome these issues using a governed operational data model that detects contradictions, assigns ownership, captures corrections in the flow of work, and continuously measures whether the digital representation still matches the factory. Attendees will leave with a practical framework for distinguishing data that is merely present from data that is trustworthy enough to support reliable and impactful operational decisions.
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	(Robert Reinartz, Matthew Robinson and Cathy Poliak) Software to Transform a Large Job Shop into Several Small & Manageable Mini-Job Shops (aka Manufacturing Cells) Overview of this session: A time-tested solution to the chaotic flow that exists on the shop floor of the typical job shop is to dissolve its work centers and distribute the machines (or other equipment) they have into stand-alone high-mix manufacturing cells. Think of each cell as essentially being a mini-job shop which can fulfill orders for any P/N in a part family! Any cell has minimum dependence on external resources and its machine-labor resources are well-

utilized. Unfortunately, it is hard to manually (or even using Excel) compare the routings of a few 100, maybe 1000 or more P/Ns, to find P/Ns with identical/similar routings that can be grouped into part families. Historically, when the product mix is large, traditional methods such as Eye-Balling, Mnemonic Clustering ^[2] and PQPR Analysis ([Link](#)) have failed. **Today**, the use of Machine Learning (and Data Science) algorithms has nearly eliminated this barrier to simplifying shop floor management in any job shop. Why “nearly”? Because it is often impossible to include in a cell all the machines (or other equipment) that it needs to be stand-alone and self-sufficient. Check the classification (Monument, Expensive, Duplicable, Mobile, Outside Vendors, Replaceable by Alternative Machine and Exception Operation) of that machine! The presentation will begin by showing the results obtained using established machine-part grouping methods used in PFAST that are described in the book ([Link](#)). Then, it will show the results obtained using the GTS2021 software which uses Machine Learning techniques. **Acknowledgement:** The historical routing data used for this study was provided by [Ryan McCauley](#), VP Operations at [ODAT Machine](#).

9:30 – 10:00 a.m. ([Smart Khaewsukkho](#)) Facilitating Shop Floor Management in a High-Variety High-Variability Job Shop

Overview of this presentation: Job shops deal with constant variability caused by rush orders, shared machines, shifting bottlenecks, unpredictable demand, changing product mix, etc. on a weekly, sometimes daily, basis. Traditional Lean tools may help identify to identify waste but, otherwise, they provide a static view (at best, snapshots) of a dynamic system. [SGETTI](#) is a simulation-powered Lean tool built for high-mix, low-volume manufacturing facilities, in particular, job shops. Using real time data pulled from the ERP, MES, MMS and other IT systems, it allows shops to model their operations and test improvement ideas virtually before making changes on the floor. With SGETTI, any HMLV (high-mix low-volume) manufacturer, including job shops, will be able to (i) Visualize actual production flow that occurred during any period of shop floor operations, (ii) Identify true system constraints, (iii) Compare improvement options and (iv) Estimate impact on lead time, WIP, and throughput. SGETTI has a simple goal --- to improve flow in any job shop with less risk and high predictability based on data that is being gathered continuously and fed to its machine learning algorithms and simulation models.

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.

- BREAK
- NETWORKING
- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS

Keys to Scheduling, Order Release and Shop Floor Monitoring

10:30 – 11:00 a.m. ([Ashe Menon](#) and [Rachel Lemond](#)) Client Success Story: Profitability Through Manufacturing in the Most Challenging of Times in the Oil & Gas Industry (2015 – 2018)

Overview of this presentation: Manufacturers are under constant pressure to increase the productivity, utilization, uptime, etc. for their equipment. And that is the disastrous shortcoming of all the commercial machine monitoring systems that are available today --- they assume that a metric like OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) and dashboards that display a range of KPIs for their machines are sufficient for making correct operational decisions. Too often, however, machine monitoring systems become tools for measuring (and intimidating) employees rather instead of helping them to improve the machines, work environment and factory floor communications. This single-minded focus on OEE (E=Equipment) that leads to ignoring OEE (E=Employee) festers resistance to change due to the absence of employee engagement. Operational Excellence cannot be achieved without Respect for Employees. This presentation introduces the Auredia Manufacturing Profitability System (AMPS) and demonstrates how a modern machine monitoring platform achieves (1) profitability by providing real-time visibility into machine performance, monitoring production flow, reducing equipment downtime and (2) empowers and encourages employees by guiding them to take actions to eliminate the root causes for poor machine and labor utilization. The AMPS is the only system in its category that, in addition to Overall Flow Effectiveness (OEE), tracks two other metrics --- OLE (Overall Labor Effectiveness) and OFE (Overall Flow Effectiveness). The two metrics --- OLE and OEE --- are connected in a Man-Machine Chart whereas OFE takes into consideration both factors that impact OTD (On Time Delivery) --- the performance of the machines and the speed of material flows between any pair of machines in the shop.

11:00 – 11:30 a.m. ([Pranav Srihari](#) and [Leo Jiang](#)) From ERP Recommendations to an Executable Shop-Floor Plan

Overview of this presentation: High-Mix Low-Volume manufacturers often run MRP to create an (infeasible) schedule daily. Naturally, they will spend each day expediting parts, moving jobs, and reconciling spreadsheets.

² Mnemonic clustering (also known as semantic clustering) is a highly effective memory technique that involves grouping similar ideas, concepts, or terms together by category. By organizing disconnected items into logical groups, your brain can encode and retrieve the information much faster than by trying to memorize them individually. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#)] **ALSO:** Google “How Mnemonic Clustering works”.

The issue is not simply that scheduling is a difficult computational problem. The bigger issue lies with shop floor execution having to simultaneously plan for problems such as customer-initiated delivery changes, material non-availability, capacity constraints, on-the-fly changes in the routings of some orders and machine breakdowns. This presentation will demonstrate why an MRP-recommended schedule is simply not a feasible executable production plan! Using a practical example of a high-mix mold manufacturer, it will show how manufacturers can connect customer demand, on-hand inventory, open purchase orders, BOMs, routings, finite resource capacities and real-time knowledge of shop floor status into an executable production plan. Attendees will see how this planning and scheduling identifies which jobs can actually be run, which jobs will be late, which resources are constraining bottlenecks and which priority dispatching rules will yield the greatest operational impact.

11:30 a.m. – Noon (Frederick Gertz) Practical Scheduling of Component Manufacturing and Final Assembly of a Truck Weighing Scale

Overview of this presentation: This presentation will demonstrate a practical approach to production scheduling in a vertically-integrated factory that produces a wide range of Truck Weighing Scales ([Example](#)). It will demonstrate how a Resource-Constrained Project Scheduling Problem (RCPSp) formulation can be used to model assembly operations, including shared resources and precedence relationships, to generate a feasible initial schedule. The approach uses swarm-based heuristic optimization to produce schedules that are practical to execute, despite incomplete data, real operating conditions on the factory floor and evolving shop floor constraints. The proposed approach has a “sandbox capability” to do what-if analyses to evaluate the impact of schedule changes on throughput, bottlenecks and overall schedule feasibility. This essential capability is achieved through rapid scenario iteration to support decision-making under uncertainty to allow a team to evaluate alternatives before making changes on the shop floor. If time permits, we will briefly discuss how this approach extends to other job shop problems that involve routing changes on the fly, sequencing with sequence-dependent setup changeover times and multi-stage scheduling.

Noon – 1:00 p.m.

- LUNCH
- NETWORKING
- ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS

Production Planning + Scheduling + Execution = Shop Floor Management

1:00 – 1:30 p.m. (Moulydharan Vallal) Real-Time Scheduling of a High-Mix Batch Production Flow Shop

Overview of this presentation: *Part 1 of this presentation* will describe Kairos, a simulation-based scheduling and execution system built internally at Sila Nanotechnologies for a high-mix, constraint-heavy batch-processing flexible flow shop environment. Key topics that will be discussed include (i) why traditional ERP and MRP scheduling failed in this context, (ii) how we designed a heuristic simulation engine that re-optimizes the entire plant every 15 minutes, (iii) how the system integrates directly with plant operations and MES data, (iv) lessons learned from deployment and adoption in a live factory, and (v) a short live demonstration of the system. *Part 2 of this presentation* will focus specifically on how AI tools were used to design, prototype, test, and harden Kairos. The emphasis will not be on AI-driven scheduling logic but on AI as a software development accelerator. Key topics that will be discussed include how AI helped to (i) translate plant constraints into executable simulation code, (ii) generate test scenarios, (iii) validate edge cases and (iv) rapidly iterate on data integration with ERP and MES systems. Key topics that will be discussed include practical examples of moving from whiteboard logic to a production-ready scheduling engine in weeks rather than months, while maintaining deterministic and explainable decision logic. *Part 3 of this presentation* will focus on Kairos as a case study in architecting and implementing a plant-wide scheduling system from first principles. It was not built as an IT project but as an operations system designed by an Industrial Engineer embedded in the factory. The system architecture was shaped by end-to-end ownership of flow, costing, bottlenecks, WIP policies and maintenance constraints. Key topics that will be discussed include (i) how traditional requirements hand-offs often fail in complex manufacturing environments, (ii) how functional system builders bridge the gap between plant reality and software design and (iii) how change management was handled during deployment.

1:30 – 2:00 p.m. (Amir Etezazi and Hessam Vali) What An MES (Manufacturing Execution System) Does that an ERP Does Not

Overview of this session: The Optegrity MES (Manufacturing Execution System) does not replace an ERP or offer the tools to implement Job Shop Lean. Instead, it supplies both with the one thing they have always been missing --- complete and accurate shop floor data delivered when and wherever it is needed to whoever needs it. This presentation will feature several case studies that demonstrate the benefits of integrating an ERP and an MES:

- **Before MES:** Paper travelers, end-of-shift data entry, verbal hand-offs between operators and rework performed

without a documented NCR • After MES: Built-in clocking by job, step and operator; Digital Work Instructions and Standard Work that operators actually follow; quality checks and defect capture embedded directly in the flow of work rather than reconstructed after the fact ***and*** real-time visibility into queues, delays and bottlenecks. A good MES “has its finger on” daily operations involving Production Planning, Quality Control, CI Kaizens, Employee Cross-Training, Process Documentation, Work Order Release, Resource-constrained Operations Scheduling, Shop Floor Control, etc. If any attendee works in a job shop-type production facility that is planning to implement an MES, then this presentation will give them three major takeaways: 1. Common obstacles encountered during each implementation 2. Strategies that were adopted to overcome the obstacles 3. Measurable improvements that were achieved on critical KPIs.	
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.	(Shahrukh Irani) After 20+ Years, A Changing of the Guard is Essential
Overview of this session: The three parts of this presentation will offer a personal view of my vision of the future (if any) of Job Shop Lean: 1. (Part 1 of 3) Job Shop Lean Think Tank: It is imperative to <u>continuously</u> grow and evolve the body of knowledge on Job Shop Lean over time through research, software development, industrial validation and shared experiences. This conference brought together a think tank of accomplished and experienced individuals who could continue to advance the theory, practice and global implementation of Job Shop Lean. 2. (Part 2 of 3) Implement the 4th Principle of Lean (Link): Principle #4 is stated very succinctly by the pioneers of Lean --- <i>Establish Pull Scheduling (in the Value Stream)</i>. However, given the current offerings of ERP, FCS and MES systems, the task remains to develop an integrated system for Production Planning &Control, Operations Scheduling, Shop Floor Execution, etc. 3. (Part 3 of 3) Job Shop Manager’s Decision Support System (JSMDSS): The Job Shop Manager's Decision Support System (JSMDSS) is a suite of software tools being developed by a team of Industrial Engineers, Data Scientists and Operations Researchers. It will “wrap itself” around the data that is resident in existing IT systems --- ERP, FCS, MES, MMS --- that most job shops use today. It will analyze and correlate the data resident in these connected but disparate IT systems to generate actionable insights and suggest recommended actions to be taken by the decision-makers in any job shop.	
2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	• BREAK • NETWORKING • ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS WITH SPEAKERS
Open Forum with Q&A	
3:00 – 4:45 p.m.	(Shahrukh Irani) You Ask, We Answer (or At Least Try To Answer)
Overview of this session: This session will be a Q&A session with an open forum format involving a random lottery. Every member of the audience will write any one challenge that his/her job shop is facing on a Post It note (“chit”), fold it and drop it into a bucket. Once all chits received from interested members of the audience have been collected, we will pull at random a chit and announce the challenge written on it. Then the rest of us will offer helpful ideas, share experiences (or even offer condolences due to the complexity of the challenge). Hopefully, the individual who submitted that challenge walks away with some ideas on what he/she could do once they get back to work. Then we will select the next challenge and the next challenge.... this process will continue until we run out of time. Let us not stop here! If any member of the audience would like to share ideas that they have already implemented (or even wish to bounce their ideas about implementing Job Shop Lean when they return to work), I will say, “Bring it on!” Step right up to the podium and share your work with us. You are in the company of peers whose only desire is to help each other to successfully implement Job Shop Lean --- or whatever practice will benefit your company’s bottom line and top line.	
Relevant Information for this Presentation	
1. Please see Appendix 2 Challenges Faced by Any Job Shop and Suggestions to Address the Challenges. 2. Please see Appendix 3 Debunking Myths about Running a High-Performance Job Shop.	
4:45 - 5:00 p.m.	• CONFERENCE EVALUATIONS • TEARFUL FAREWELLS • ADJOURNMENT

Appendix 1

Will You Benefit By Attending This Conference?

Please answer the following questions to indicate the severity of each of the challenges of high-mix low-volume (HMLV) manufacturing that are listed below:

Our product mix widens every year but we do not rationalize it using Value Analysis.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Our Work-In-Process and Finished Goods Inventory is a significant %age of Annual Sales.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Our Time To Ship (TTS) for any order is high.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Setup Times and Cycle Times in our routers are inaccurate.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Vendor lead times are high, their deliveries are unpredictable and quality rejects are common.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Our factory layout is not organized into work cells such that each cell produces a product family.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Our factory could not handle changes in product mix and/or production volumes.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

We have no formal program to reduce setup times on bottleneck equipment.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

We use the daily production schedule from our ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Factory logistics finds it difficult to coordinate the timely delivery of kits of parts for assembly.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Our on-floor tracking and control of tooling, inventory, consumables, dies/molds, etc. is poor.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

We do not track and display key metrics on factory performance on the factory floor.

☐ Major Problem

☐ Minor Problem

☐ No Problem

Appendix 2

Challenges Faced by Any Job Shop and Suggestions to Address the Challenges

Challenge	Suggestions to Address the Challenge
Our shop owner(s) do not walk their talk which makes our morning huddles a waste of our time!	1. Gemba Walks? Stand on the X? Obeyas? Morning Huddles? – All these “Lean tools” may be necessary but are far from sufficient. 2. Instead, if you can identify part families in your product mix AND you implement a cell to produce each part family, then on any given day you need to go to that areas in the shop where a cell is located and get a run down about their problems, their improvement ideas, their morale, their manpower needs, etc.
How to offset increase in material costs and lead times due to tariffs?	1. Partner with local competitors (or even non-competitors) to do bulk buys of key RMs to get quantity discounts to offset material costs? 2. Switch from Minimum Quantity purchasing by SKUs to Minimum \$ purchasing regardless of SKUs?
AI: How Does a Job Shop Get Value From It?	I will defer to members of the audience take the lead on solving this challenge.
What to do about fluctuating demand?	1. You sleep in the bed you make! ☹ There is no question that being a Make-To-Order manufacturer (as does any job shop) is hard compared to being a Make-To-Stock manufacturer (as does Toyota). Frankly, the best job shop is no job shop! 2. When you buy (or get) the RM only after the order has been signed off with the customer, and that RM is coming in from China. 3. My Solution? Segment the product mix into Runners, Repeater and Strangers --- Produce the Runners + Repeaters in one shop and produce the Strangers in a “C-Cell” --- In the shop that produces the Runner and Repeaters, implement cells to the maximum extent possible (even if you have to revise your product mix along the way)! 4. Cull the Strangers from the product mix? 5. Find any part families in that segment then go seek out markets to move them into the other two segments? 6. Partner with a local mom-and-pop shop to be an extension of your shop?
How does one cash in on the re-shoring that is ongoing?	I will defer to members of the audience take the lead on solving this challenge
How do we tackle the shortage of skilled labor?	1. Are you sure that you have one? If you could, please record and share with me the video of your bottleneck machine (or department) in operation for an entire shift. Be sure to have the clock display time on the video! 2. My Solution? Segment the product mix into Runners, Repeater and Strangers --- Produce the Runners + Repeaters in one shop and produce the Strangers in a “C-Cell” --- In the shop that produces the Runner and Repeaters, implement cells to the maximum extent possible (even if you have to revise your product mix along the way to throw out the outliers)! 3. Cross train the operators in the cell so that multi-machine tending by the same operator becomes possible

	4. My Humble Request? Please do not fire employees as the first step to respond to lost sales, low sales, customers switching to competitors, etc. For each employee that you wish to fire, please consider cross-training them and repurposing them to fill a role (or roles) that are currently vacant.
Can a small shop retain employees by training and developing them ...? Or is that a sure way to lose them?	I will defer to members of the audience take the lead on solving this challenge
How does one tackled issues like work ethics, honesty, safety, mutual respect-without-boundaries, etc.?	I will defer to members of the audience take the lead on solving this challenge
Can a job shop justify a full-time Industrial Engineer?	1. I urge you to partner with academic department at a local university 2. If time permits, please meet with these speakers at the Conference --- <u>Abhinav Goyal</u> and/or (<u>Henry Weissenborn</u>, <u>Darin Alley</u> and <u>Sultan Ahmed Mohammed</u>).
Growth Planning: What are the pros and cons of (1) diversifying into new markets, (2) acquiring businesses, expanding the current facility or moving into another (bigger) facility, etc.?	1. How sure are you that you have all your ducks in a row in the shop that you are currently managing? 2. I believe firmly in the growing using knowledge of your part families to have “flexible focus” i.e. do not be reliant on one market, one customer, etc. but also not think that flexibility can be achieved with a snap of the fingers. 3. “Goodness of fit”, even when you are going to buy out and absorb another business into your existing facility must take into consideration re-layout of the factory, merging of different shop cultures (and leadership styles), integrating ERP, QMS, MES and other IT systems, etc. 4. Now I would like to throw a helpline to the audience.
Can a small manufacturer form partnerships with suppliers in order to get better customer service (shorter lead times, less uncertainty about delivery dates, better quality, etc.)?	1. Co-Opetition? 2. Virtual OEM?
Is machine utilization an important metric? Or should capacity “win back” using the POOGI advocated by TOC practitioners be the priority?	1. OEE is a SH**metric --- my argument against (A*P*Q) in favor of (A+P+Q) to determine available capacity on any machine. Also, please read <i>The Goal</i> (because TOC offers the right advice on Machine Utilization). 2. What about OLE (Overall Labor Effectiveness) as a metric? 3. Do a time study of the video of at least a shift of uninterrupted operation of your bottleneck machine(s) ex. a welder because he/she is adding value to a product if and only if the arc on the welding gun is on (which is proof that welding is in-process). 4. Right-sized machines 5. Minimize machine sharing between cells by exploring the market for used machines (instead of buying new)
Production Planning and Control ... uh, what is that?	1. Do not let your ERP do it for you! 2. Check out the better Finite Capacity Scheduling systems on the market to see if they do Demand Management. 3. Dr. <u>Prasad Velaga</u> has a valid claim --- in principle, a Finite Capacity Scheduler could be used for order slotting subject to resource constraints for each week of a 4-week rolling horizon. In principle, <u>Schedlyzer</u> can do dual resource-constrained JSS (Job Shop Scheduling) at both levels --- Master Production Schedule and Work Order Release (which is more challenging to implement successfully).

Can a job shop ever have a reliable schedule to work with every day (or at least for a week) – Part 1 of 2?	1. A job shop is not an assembly line. So please be warned if your favorite Toyota-trained Lean consultant recommends that you use “Pull Scheduling” which, in turn, requires you to use heijunka, part-specific kanbans, part-specific inventory buffers, etc.! 2. However, it may be possible to use this scheduling approach for a portion of your product mix if you have LTA (Long Term Agreements) from customers to produce those parts.
Can a job shop ever have a reliable schedule to work with every day (or at least for a week) – Part 2 of 2?	1. A schedule is only as good as the effectiveness of shop floor execution ex. Do you have an MES bolted onto your FCS? Are your material handlers trained to be “water spiders”? ... and more 2. Beware of (i) “schedule nervousness” and (ii) indirect costs of updating shop floor status and feeding that data into the FCS so it can re-generate yet another schedule --- I urge initial focus on eliminating avoidable disruptions to the daily schedule
Are we using the correct metrics to measure the performance of our shop, our machines, our people, our suppliers, etc.?	1. There are Metrics and then there are SH**Metrics. 2. Cash Flow Velocity is a (valid) metric. 3. Total #of Pieces Shipped per Day is a valid Sh**metric.
Overtime: Should it be an entitlement or an incentive (maybe even a reward) for good performance?	1. I am of the firm belief that O/T is not an entitlement. Instead, it should be a reward and selectively paid to employees depending on whether they are working in the Bottleneck department or any non-bottleneck department too.
To make or not to make this d##n part?	1. Unplanned proliferation of product mix is easily an example of self-increased complexity of a job shop’s already high product mix. 2. I could provide (if requested by the individual) relevant literature that explains how to use Machine Learning (or Advanced Lean Six Sigma methods) to approach this problem with a data-driven decision-making mindset. 3. If time permits, please meet with this speaker at the conference --- <u>Sultan Ahmed Mohammed</u> --- as he is using a predictive analytics tool that you could adopt/adapt/reject as the case may turn out to be.
Are we pricing our jobs correctly (or incorrectly and therefore are losing money)?	1. This is a highly erroneous ill-informed statement “Estimating is not an exact science and the variation in demand makes accurate estimating difficult”. I say this because <u>Sultan Ahmed Mohammed</u> is using a data-driven predictive analytics tool that was developed by a team of students from the Department of Statistics and Data Science at the University of Houston. 2. Especially today when Machine Learning algorithms are freely available online, I will humbly (but honestly) advise you that you should use either (or both) the Variant and Generative AI approaches that can work with mixed data. 3. If time permits, please meet with the team that is developing the GTS2021 app that was introduced during this session “Apps to Simplify the Operational Challenges of Job Shops” earlier in the conference.
How good is that Quoting and Estimating software?	I will defer to members of the audience take the lead on solving this challenge. Especially, if there are users of apps that do Quoting and Estimating such as <u>Paperless Parts</u> , <u>Swarf</u> and <u>UpTool</u> , then there is even more reason to do so.

Appendix 3

Debunking Myths about Running a High-Performance Job Shop

Myth	Reason(s) for Debunking the Myth
Cells do not work in job shops because (1) their product mix is diverse, (2) their product mix keeps changing (often frequently) and (2) the demand for the different products is volatile.	Since the 1960's, cells have been successfully implemented in a variety of high-mix low-volume job shop-like manufacturing facilities.
Heijunka is an effective method for Master Production Scheduling.	The underlying assumptions of this approach do not match the typical operational environment of any job shop. A job shop only commits to produce an order when the customer accepts price and due date (else a Make-To-Stock policy is ill-advised for any job shop)
Pull Scheduling using a kanban system works in any job shop.	Yes but for only those P/Ns in the product mix that are Runners (maybe even Strangers) with an LTA (Long Term Agreement) with their customers. Otherwise, if time buffers are preferable in job shops, it is a bigger challenge to have kanban sizes measured in hours of work on any machine (instead of # of units of product).
Master Production Scheduling (MPS) as done by any ERP on the market slots orders subject to delivery dates and resource capacity constraints.	I do not know of any ERP that has the capabilities of a genuine FCS (Finite Capacity Scheduler) like OpCenter to do this. The standard approach used by any ERP is to slot orders in the production schedule using the age-old proven-to-be-totally-wrong approach of backward scheduling from due dates using fixed Lead Times.
Work centers need not be sub-divided into smaller groups of machines with identical/interchangeable capabilities.	Here is the consequence (if you think that Operator Motion waste cannot be ignored), the supervisor of each work center makes a real-time decision to load a job on the earliest available machine using FIFO priority dispatching.
CONWIP is an effective method for Production Planning, Work Order Release and Job Shop Scheduling.	The underlying assumptions of CONWIP do not align with those of a job shop. Also, I have not come across well-documented success stories in the open literature.
Drum-Buffer-Rope is an effective method for Production Planning, Work Order Release and Job Shop Scheduling.	Drum-Buffer-Rope is an effective method for Production Planning, Work Order Release and Job Shop Scheduling.
If we are not making chips, we are not making money.	First , you are not making money if you are making chips on the non-bottleneck machine(s) in the shop. Every job shop owner ought to read (and understand) what Eliyahu Goldratt teaches in his book (and video) <i>The Goal</i> . Next , despite making a humongous amount of chips on the metal cutting machines in a shop, those gains could be nullified by the non-machining work centers like the Parts Washing Station or Inspection department, not to mention the high lead times (say 1-2 weeks) of your Outside Vendors (heat treatment, electroplating, thread grinding, etc.). Finally , what good does it do "to hurry up to slow down" when the functional/departmental layout is guaranteed to create a batch-and-queue mode of production which embeds the costs and delays of waste (TIMWOODS) in each and every order that you produce?
To implement Lean in a job shop, start with 5S.	It is foolhardy to undertake 5S as a goal unto itself. Instead, it should be undertaken with the intention to facilitate the implementation of more meaningful "higher level" projects such as Facility Layout, Shop Floor Communications, Inventory Control, etc.

We do not need a Finite Capacity Scheduler to schedule our shop. Instead, our scheduler has her spreadsheets and our ERP system. We have a morning huddle, and if need be, an afternoon huddle in our obeya on the shop floor. Our team communicates all the time to keep our orders on track.	Firefighting and expediting has been in use since the 1900s. If that is substitute for rejecting the time, effort and resources to objectively evaluate the pros and cons of integrating an FCS with the ERP I concede that I cannot win this argument with any job shop owner who thinks this way!
We are a data-driven shop. We have a machine monitoring system with TV monitors all over the shop displaying a range of operational metrics for all our machines such as OEE, production rates, scrap rates, etc.	A machine monitoring system presents only the “machines side” of the shop. What about the “parts side” of the shop? If being data-driven means to base planning and execution on junk metrics like the OEE of individual machines. I do not know of any job shop owner who seeks to impress their customers by boasting about their machine utilization and/or machine uptime. Instead, I think it makes more sense to track (and display) the progress of every active job on the floor to ensure on-time shipment by customer-specified due date. In particular, similar to have an andon works on a Toyota assembly line, the operators log problems/issues that they fixed (or were unable to fix) as the order flowed through the shop.
To implement Lean in a job shop, develop a Value Stream Map for one of the high-volume P/N's in the product mix.	And ignore the remainder of the product mix which typically consists of three segments --- Runners, Repeaters and Strangers?
A job shop, even one that does about \$10-\$15 million in sales per year, cannot afford to hire a full-time Industrial Engineer.	Please feel free to listen to the speakers in the afternoon session of this workshop --- Darin Alley, Henry Weissenborn and Sultan Ahmed Mohammed.
A job shop does not need to have a Finite Capacity Scheduler (FCS) as a front end to its ERP in order to generate viable production schedules subject to machine, labor, material, tooling, etc. constraints.	The case studies published on the website of FCS vendors like OpCenter, Tactic, PlanetTogether, Schedlyzer, Plataine, etc. will easily debunk this myth.
A job shop should focus on all-out shop wide elimination of the Eight Forms of Waste (TIMWOODS).	I believe that <i>Waste Elimination</i> is not the primary objective of any business! Instead, I contend that the Seven Forms of Waste are (1) symptoms and (2) quantifiable measure for the delays (and costs) of fulfilling every order placed by every customer. IMHO, I believe that <i>Lead Time Reduction</i> is the primary objective of any business! The reason is that a detailed timeline of all activities performed to fulfill an order constitutes the Lead Time for that order (and the individual costs that constitute the overall Fulfillment Cost for that order). And the easiest and simplest way to do this is to NOT do what we ought not to do at all in the first place --- NVA activities -- - because every NVA activity equates to (1) a delivery delay added to the Lead Time, (2) an additional cost added to the Order Fulfillment Cost and, worst of all, (3) a potential loss of goodwill (and possibly business too) if the customer receives defective product(s) that need rework or, in the worst case, have to be scrapped!
We are a machine shop. We are in the business of selling capacity not products.	First, the product mix of any job shop contains Runners Repeaters and Strangers. So, depending on whether it was used to produce a P/N in one of those three typical segments in any job shop's product mix, a machine hour (and labor hour associated with that machine hour) is not going to earn the same Revenue (and Margin) for the shop. Next, which machine's capacity are you selling --- capacity on a bottleneck machine (or machines) or the (remaining) non-bottleneck machines? If any job shop owner has not yet read (and understood) what Eliyahu Goldratt teaches in his book (and video) <i>The Goal</i>, please do so (because it is a waste of capacity and hard-

	earned money to maximize utilization on the non-bottleneck machines in any job shop. Finally, if a job shop owner values his/her employees' talent and loyalty, would they not show off to customers the variety of complex P/Ns that are produced instead of photos of their expensive machines? A job shop must focus on selling CAPABILITY (not CAPACITY) to its customers.
It is the strategy of a job shop to convert all raw material for an order into finished parts. These extra parts can be sold at the higher small quantity price in the future. Source: Nathan Cline	Maybe if there is an LTA (Long Term Agreement) with a kanban system with minimum buy quantities on every pull, then I would agree? Otherwise, I know of cases where the job shop had to write off those parts at the end of the year for any number of reasons given to them by their customers. In that case, those parts (1) wasted bar stock (or forgings or casting or plate) that could have been used to produce parts if-and-when needed, (2) ate up machine and labor capacity that could have been used to produce other firm orders, (3) incurred inventory carrying costs, (4) (possibly) incurred tooling costs, etc. <i>On a somewhat unrelated note</i>, I worked with a "plastics produces manufacturer in Ohio" who would charge their customer top dollar to build a prototype for a new product that they wanted to introduce to the market. The price included all the above costs/losses that were listed earlier. Despite that marked-up price, the customer went with them because this supplier of theirs was their top-of-the-line supplier.
We do not need for the router for any order to show specific machines used for each operation in the router. We only specify the work center for that operation then let the supervisor on the floor take a real-time decision to load that order on a particular machine. Alternatively, if our client has purchased our MES, it will automatically route the order to the earliest available machine in the work center. Source: Prasad Velaga	An MES cannot (and never will) schedule because it needs an FCS (Finite Capacity Scheduler) sitting between it and the ERP system to perform that step. Job Shop Scheduling with dual resource (machine and labor) constraints is not an easy problem to solve. And even if it is solved on a computer using heuristic algorithms (today AI is claimed to be capable of doing that --- yeah right!), there is no telling that once the schedule hits the shop floor that it will not suffer from multiple disruptions due to any number of unanticipated and unplanned events. Ideally, per my experience, an FCS has "to sit between" an ERP and MES!

Appendix 4

Education, Training and Development of Job Shop Employees

Trade-related Skills ¹	Employee	Supervisor	Engineer	Manager	Executive
Trade-related skills like machining, welding, sheet metal fabrication, PCB assembly, etc.					
Soft Skills	Employee	Supervisor	Engineer	Manager	Executive
Conflict Resolution					
Teamwork: Leading versus Following					
Servant Leadership versus God Complex					
How can we learn what it takes to be flexible, agile and adaptable from: - ER personnel² - Firefighters³ - Police who report to the site of a major traffic accident⁴ - Detectives⁵					
Mentoring & Coaching					
Creativity⇌Ideation					
Morning Huddle Management					

¹ This training is best entrusted to Houston City College, trade schools, professional organizations such as NTMA and, best of all, the manufacturers themselves ex. a group of non-competing companies could team up and share the time, effort and money to develop a curriculum, host classes at each member company, oversee the updating and advancement of the curriculum as needed, etc.

² ER personnel possess key problem-solving traits including rapid assessment (triage) skills, critical thinking under high pressure, and the ability to multitask effectively in chaotic environments. They are decisive, observant, and adaptable team players who can quickly prioritize care to solve urgent patient health.

³ Firefighters possess critical problem-solving traits centered on rapid decision-making, high-stress adaptability, and resourceful thinking. Key traits include situational awareness, critical thinking under pressure, adaptability to changing environments, and strong teamwork. They excel at identifying patterns, implementing tactical, creative solutions, and maintaining composure to ensure safety.

⁴ Police at a traffic accident utilize problem-solving traits focused on rapid scene stabilization, methodical evidence gathering, and quick decision-making. Key traits include adaptability in securing dangerous scenes, analytical skills for accident reconstruction, communication for interviewing witnesses, and calm under pressure to prioritize medical aid and traffic flow.

⁵ Detectives possess a combination of analytical and interpersonal traits, characterized by critical thinking, intense attention to detail, and tireless tenacity to solve complex problems. They use deductive and inductive reasoning to connect scattered information, often relying on curiosity and lateral thinking to uncover patterns or motives others miss.

Basic Problem-Solving	Employee	Supervisor	Engineer	Manager	Executive
Waste Identification					
Discussing a Problem using a Why? Mind Map ⁶					
Solving a Problem using a How? Mind Map					
Work Cell Design - Layout Design - Space Requirements Planning 5S & Visual Management - Systematic Handling Analysis (SHA) - Shop Floor Communications and Logistics using a Water Spider					
Quality-At-Source 8D Problem-Solving - Seven Quality Tools - Error-Proofing					
Workplace (and Workstation) Ergonomics - Human Factors Engineering - Safety Engineering - Worker Injury Risk Assessment using www.Tumeke.io - HERCA (Human Error Root Cause Analysis)					
Setup Reduction					
Respect for Equipment - TPM 101 for machines (because there is a Maintenance department also) - Maintaining shared tools (especially in a multi-shift factory) - Shadow boards for storing fixtures, tools, gauges, etc. - Workspace Layout - Karakuri					
Inventory Management - Measuring Workload Variation for a Bottleneck Machine (or Cell/Line) - Quantity-based Kanbans versus Workload-based Kanbans - Visual Management of In-Queue and Out-Queue at any machine (or entire cell/line) - WIP Control (s, S) inventory model for 2-bin kanban system - Replenishment Signals (flags, lights, walkie-talkies, pick ticket for water spider, etc.) - SRIGHT (Smart and RIGHT-sized) racks, containers, shelves, bins, etc.					
Project Reporting - A3 Report - SQDC Whiteboard - Metrics⁷ versus Sh**metrics⁸					
Advanced Problem-Solving	Employee	Supervisor	Engineer	Manager	Executive
Employee Training for Flexibility, Agility and Adaptability					

⁶ I use the Mind Map to integrate these Lean Six Sigma Tools --- 5 Why's, Fishbone Diagram, Tree Diagram

⁷ Cash Flow Velocity, Revenue versus COGS, etc.

⁸ Efficiency, Productivity, Machine Utilization, Labor Utilization, WIP is an ASSET, etc.

- What can we learn from Multi-Tasking Machines, Hybrid Machines and Flexible Machining Cells? - Skill Matrix for Multi-Skilling/Cross-Training (Example)					
SMART CHART: Enabling An Employee (or Team of Employees) Self-Improve their Work - Flow Process Chart - Macro Work Analysis using ASME Activity Symbols - Micro Work Analysis using Therbligs 5W1H Questioning Process - ECRSSA Thinking Process - Methods Analysis using Motion Analysis - Parallelization of Sequential Work using RCPSP - Capture and feeding of legitimate “tribal knowledge” and other curated literature to train an LLM to be a reliable AI Teacherbot					
Visualization-aided Analysis, Rationalization and Simplification of High Mix Work Systems - Using a Decision Tree - Flexible Standard Work Instruction for a Part Family - Using a Flow Chart - Using a Group Technology Classification and Coding System - Using a Product-Process Matrix - Using Multivariate Statistical Analysis and Data Science - Using a Multi-Product Flow Process Chart - Using a Multi-Product Flow Diagram - Using a From-To Chart - Using a Gantt Chart - Using a Value Network Map					
Variety Reduction and Standardization - Using a Group Technology Classification and Coding System - Using Multivariate Statistics (and Machine Learning) and Data Science					
Design of a HMLV Job Shop-type Cell - See lecture notes for INDE6378 - See lecture notes for INDE6377					
Measuring and Exploiting Capacity Utilization on Bottleneck Machine - TOC’s Process of Ongoing Improvement (POOGI) [Video] The Goal - Q&A - Scheduling 101 using LEKIN - Single Machine - Flow Shop - Job Shop - Drum-Buffer-Rope versus Schedlyzer Lite - Man-Machine Chart - OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) - OLE (Overall Labor Effectiveness)					
Setup Reduction for High Mix with Sequence-dependent Setup Changeover Times					
Multi-Criterion Comparison and Trade-Off Analysis of Competing Ideas/Suggestions					
Production Line Simulation using FlowshopSim					
[Optional] Mixed Model Assembly Line Design using Taktiq					

Advanced Manufacturing Technology ⁹	Employee	Supervisor	Engineer	Manager	Executive
Robotics & Automation					
Discrete Event Simulation (Digital Twin)					
MES					
Machine Monitoring Systems					
Machine Learning, Multivariate Statistics, Data Science, etc.					
Predictive Analytics					
Artificial Intelligence (AI)					

⁹ How much is necessary (and useful) before it become unnecessary (and useless)?