

HalMacomber

The Project Reformer's e-Tip of the Week

008: Set an Improvement Agenda for Your Project

The Japanese have a goal-setting practice called *hoshin*. They use it for annual and five-year planning. It is a top-down and bottoms-up approach that aligns individual intentions for improvement with the strategic intentions of the firm. The brilliance of hoshin goals is in the limitation imposed for no more than 2 or 3 goals/division. Why is it brilliant? First, there are no corporate conflicting intentions. Everyone is focussed on the same thing. Second, it engages everyone's *reticular activating system* in the same way.

Take the time at the outset of every project to set 2 or 3 improvement goals. Do this with your team rather than for your team. Provide the context of the strategic intentions of your company. Also share what your customer would appreciate as added value. Then solicit team proposals in a way that allows a (re)shaping of goals. Finally, create a routine of reviewing improvements in team meetings.

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