



SDI Review Form 1.6

Journal Name:	Journal of Economics, Management and Trade
Manuscript Number:	Ms_JEMT_38100
Title of the Manuscript:	The Role of Middle Managers in Becoming Lean: A Systematic Review and Synthesis of the Literature
Type of the Article	Review paper

General guideline for Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<http://www.sciencedomain.org/page.php?id=sdi-general-editorial-policy#Peer-Review-Guideline>)



SDI Review Form 1.6

PART 1: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
Compulsory REVISION comments	1) The paper focused largely on the role of middle level managers as drivers of CI/lean. However, the nexus between prescriptive and emergent strategies vis-à-vis top management and middle level management were not fully explored. To enable the arguments of the authors seats well, the review of the following is strongly indicated: • Mintzberg, H "The Strategy Concept I: Five Ps for Strategy" <u>California Management Review</u>, Fall 1987 • Mintzberg, H "Crafting Strategy", <u>Harvard Business Review</u>, July-August 1987 2) The sense of urgency in change attracted the attention of the authors. The authors failed to credit Kotter, J.P for this as outlined below: • Kotter, J.P (1996) <u>leading change</u>, Boston: Harvard Business School Press 3) It is not sufficient for the writers to state CI/lean culture. The dimension of culture driving the elements in CI/lean must be shown. The paper below should be reviewed and incorporated in the literature review. • Hofstede, G "Think locally, Act Globally: Cultural Constraints in Personnel Management", <u>Management International Review</u>, 38(2), 1988 4) To capture the role of top management in the failure of strategy implementation fully, the fallacy of programmatic change must attract the attention of the authors.	1) Many thanks for this suggestion. Please note that we adopted a systematic review protocol, so in sections 3 and 4 we can only use the literature base that was selected and accounted for in section 2 on the review method used. In the revised article, we refer to Mintzberg's work on deliberate vs emergent strategy development, as an interesting avenue to pursue in future work in this area. 2) Regarding the notion of "urgency of change" (that can indeed be attributed to Kotter): the same comment as above applies here. That is, we used a systematic approach to selecting the literature (see section 2 of the paper). As such, the "urgency of change" notion arises from our review of this literature base. NB: in this paper, we do not intend to produce a complete history and review of this notion; this would also require a review of the immense literature on organizational change and change management. 3) As in points 1 and 2, we cannot disrupt the systematic and transparent nature of our literature selection in sections 2,3 and 4. But in the revised paper, we have inserted a reference to Hofstede's (1988) work on the impact of national culture (Hofstede 1988), also in view of our response to a similar question raised by the other reviewer. See the Discussion & Conclusion section in the article for this addition. 4) Good point! In the Discussion & Conclusion section, we reflect on the fallacy of programmatic change as follows: "Another limitation is to see (lean) change as a programmatic change. Successful changes require top and middle managers to constantly challenge and adjust the program to make sure the change delivers the desired results (Oakland & Tanner 2007). In this respect, the main reason for unsuccessful lean transformation is that there is no or limited management of the change process during the transition (Nordin et al. 2012)."
Minor REVISION comments	Discussion/recommendation and areas of further study should not be a substitute for conclusion. Suitable conclusion is imperative. Please review.	At the end of the Discussion & Conclusion section, we added the following text: Our review indeed demonstrates that leadership by top managers is important in creating a sense of urgency regarding the need for an organizational culture of continuous improvement, but middle managers also play a pivotal role. The latter role is not an easy one, because middle managers have to change their own mindset and behavior and lead by example, in order to create and sustain changes in the entire organization [21,116]. The success of CI/Lean thus largely depends on the managers responsible for initiating and implementing the method, including middle managers [6,22]. As culture and values are to a large extent driven by top management, the role and behavior of these managers constitutes the most critical condition for effectively implementing CI [21,100].



SDI Review Form 1.6

Optional/General comments	The style of referencing is anachronistic. Please review.	We have no clue what you mean here: we looked up the word “anachronistic” in the dictionary, but it seems to make no sense in connection to the “style of referencing.”
----------------------------------	---	---

As per the guideline of editorial office we have followed VANCOUVER reference style for our paper.

Kindly see the following link:

<http://sciencedomain.org/archives/20>