Reports on conferences

Report on the Conference of Lean Accounting – an Integral Part of Lean Management

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On 24–25 April 2013 the Department of Accounting in the Faculty of Management at the University of Łódź (Poland) organized for the second time the conference regarding Lean Accounting in the context of the principles and methods of this innovative concepts of Lean Management.

The main organizers of the second edition of the conference were academics from the Department of Accounting (Faculty of Management, University of Łódź), i.a. Dr. hab. Irena Sobańska, as chair of the conference, and Dr. Ewelina Zarzycka and Marcin Michalak.

For several years the issue of lean accounting has been the subject of great interest among management practitioners, specialists and designers of management accounting/controlling systems and the academic accounting community from the city of Lodz. The managers of companies using Lean Management emphasize that the successful implementation of this management concept is not possible without appropriate changes in policies and methods in the system of the accounting which are appropriate to the essence of management philosophy.

More and more often, in practice and at an academic level, questions are asked about issues relating to the implementation of new methods in the field of accounting, as well as questions about the benefits that these new methods bring to the effectiveness of organizations operating in a dynamic global environment.

The conference, which was organized by the Department of Accounting in the Faculty of Management (University of Łódź), was an opportunity for a comprehensive look at this issue from the perspective of business practitioners and scientists.

The conference included such aspects as:
- the specifics of accounting systems/controlling systems in companies managed in accordance with the lean approach;
- systems for measuring and communicating performance through the system of lean accounting in companies applying lean management;
- cooperation and communication accounting/controlling specialists with line/products, value stream, etc. managers;

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• analysis of the information needs of the participants in the organization and their degree of satisfaction (information gap);
• the role of accounting/controlling specialists in the functional teams and in the implementation and monitoring process of kaizen projects (Six Sigma);
• lean project management: planning, communication and performance measurement;
• organization of the accounting process in terms of lean management and boundaries of the accounting system;
• creating and managing organizational culture in lean terms.

The aim of the conference was:
• to popularize innovative knowledge among accounting practitioners managers and academics in the field of lean accounting/lean management;
• providing a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience from the scope of the innovative approaches of lean accounting/lean management;
• exchange of experience from the implementation and application of lean accounting/lean management;
• presentation by practitioners of case studies of global corporations operating in Poland;
• the development of cooperation between science and business.

According to the aim the organizers, the conference had a very practical character, both in terms of participants and the speakers of the conference. The speakers were mainly managers and professionals in management accounting/controlling of international corporations that have long applied the principles and methods of the lean management.

On the first day of the conference, in addition to the plenary sessions, the organizers planned time for discussion, comments, and mutual exchange of experience between the participants and between participants and speakers, which was conducted by the Open Space method. On the second day of the conference a workshop called Lean Game took place. The aim of the workshop was to introduce the use of lean accounting in administrative and office processes and practical application of known principles during the simulation game, to inspire and engage the participants to identify and eliminate waste.

The significance of lean accounting issues in enterprises implementing or applying the concept of lean management, as well as a rich and interesting program of conferences, contributed to very great interest in it among business practitioners.

The conference was attended mainly CEOs, CFOs, directors and controlling managers, chief accountants, and managers responsible for lean, representing both large corporations and medium-sized companies that are participants in the supply chain of large companies.

In 2014 the Department of Accounting in the Faculty of Management (University of Łódź) have planned the third edition conference in the series of Lean Accounting in order to further explore issue. The organizers would like to thank the participants for coming to the conference and invite you to participate in the third conference regarding Lean Accounting as both a participant and speaker.