



I met with Mark Bell of the Riverland Development Authority who encouraged me to apply to the ILF for a grant saying he thought that I might be a good candidate. I hadn't heard of the ILF and had a quick look online. Initially I was not sure it was for me as the ILF seemed to be utilised by past recipients for mostly university type learning and this didn't seem to fit with my background or time availability. I ended up ringing Geoff Vogt (CEO of the ILF) and his enthusiastic guidance and support was exemplary. Geoff understood my thinking and suggested a Lean Tour in Japan. Instantly this appealed because it fitted in perfectly with what was happening in our business at that time. I can categorically say that I would not have gone ahead with this valuable experience had it not been for the encouragement and support from the ILF through Geoff.

The application process for me was enjoyable as it allows reflection on what it is that you are all about. The process uncovered for me a great snapshot of how balanced you are in life. I believe that there is added integrity to the ILF process because its not just about unearthing candidates with leadership and/or potential leadership in their business, or even in their industry, but leadership across their own community and parochialism for our great state of SA.

The interview was also a valuable experience with a lot of experience on the panel and the depth of the questions was refreshing and enlightening.

I chose the 2013 Shinka Lean Tour of Japan. It is a one week intensive program involving theory and practical visits to manufacturing companies in Tokyo and Nagoya. The reason for this particular selection was because Bowhill Engineering were beginning their Lean journey (8 of our staff were just beginning cert 4 Competitive Manufacturing). I felt it was important that the management had a good understanding of the bigger picture of how lean looks on a global scale. Timing of this course couldn't have been better and the previous course participant's reports were aligned to knowledge that would contribute to our companywide lean journey.

This Tour fulfilled what I was hoping it would. It has absolutely increased my perspective on what Lean looks like and the level or extent that it can be taken to. It was absolutely awesome to witness firsthand what a world class productive and efficient manufacturing environment looks and feels like, a rare and valuable experience.

The course participants that we shared this experience with were awesome. We had a great cultural experience as well as some sightseeing. The tour really did allow some great bonding and discussion with other Australian participants. This bond has been enough to extend back to Australia and we have already arranged to meet up with the SA guys, share each of our plans for the future and help to support each other and share our many ideas developed from the knowledge learned in Japan.

I feel that this experience will give me skills that I can use to help me throughout my whole life, be that at work, home or in my community. Some of the perspectives and principles learned whilst in Japan extend to everything that you do, how you react when things go wrong and how important it is to continuously improve in everything that you do.

I felt that I really needed this knowledge to enlighten me, to expose me to new ideas and situations outside of my normal circumstances. This new knowledge will help to make informed and consistent decisions and spark innovation towards better business practices. It's hard to know what is out there beyond the boundaries of SA and Australia, but so important that we do know! We are more and more operating on a global playing field and development of appropriate strategies to compete on this field is necessary. Without knowing who you are playing and how they play, it is almost impossible to strategise with a view of competing to the world standard. There are so many ideas that we have planned to

bring back and weave into our business, but none more valuable than the broad Japanese and TPS manufacturing principles as these can be adapted to suit what it is that we do and the Australian workforce that we have here at Bowhill Engineering.

As per ILF's mission, it is my intension to present my learning's and observations at several forums. There is a massive opportunity to contribute towards our lean journey internally at Bowhill by sharing my learning from the Japan trip with the team. However there are other excellent opportunities to present at various networking events as well as the ongoing opportunity to share with the many people who have shown a keen interest in hearing what I have learned and how this might be relevant to them and their life. It has been humbling to gauge the interest that has surrounded this experience and I am keen to share my thoughts and experiences.

Finally I feel that the ILF's mission to uncover and support SA's developing and potential leaders is a highly commendable mission. I am very proud, thankful and humbled to have been a recipient and look forward to participating in the newly formed and highly rated Grantees Network. What better event to spend time with awesome people of such high calibre; the people that the ILF have deemed worthy.