

**An Excerpt from...**

# I've Been Thinking

**Turning Everyday Interactions  
Into Profitable Opportunities**



"Lisa Anderson has a unique combination of big-picture perspective and hands-on ability to implement change which was vital to the function of our enterprise."

*Sheila Peyraud,  
Donaldson Company*

**LISA ANDERSON, MBA, CSCP, CLTD**



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## 15

# WHY DOING IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT

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We commonly hear the phrase “Do it right the first time”. Of course, generally speaking, who wouldn’t want to do that? Waste is bad.

However, I’ve found that there is a time when doing it right the first time is NOT the path to success – when you hold off for perfection as your view of “doing it right the first time”.

We’ve all been there; however, for the future, think about following a new plan: “When you are 80% ready, move”. I heard my consulting mentor phrase it this way, and loved the simplicity!

This week, one of my clients is experiencing a few challenges because he places an immense amount of value on doing it right the first time. Believe me, he is not alone. Think about this example: if you were to have to repeat a training session in order to start with “what is available” and follow-up at a later date with the optimal solution, it wouldn’t be doing it right the first

time. However, if you would be addressing a critical gap in the process with a short-term solution so that you kept customers happy until the optimal solution was ready, would you do it? I’d celebrate the opportunity to do it twice!

### **One Tip to Implement:**

Think about a decision you need to make where you are waiting for additional data or input. Do you have 80% of the critical

information required to make the decision? Notice I didn’t say 80% of ALL information desired; just the critical information. If you do, make a decision and move on.

You’ll find that you’ll be much more successful. The last 20% requires 80% of your time with little to no improvement in the quality of the decision. On the other hand, the time spent waiting for the additional information can bring an undesirable result!



*Waiting for perfection will derail success every time.*





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## 20

# THE POWER OF AMAZON

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I've been thinking about the power of Amazon since I facilitated an APICS tour of their San Bernardino 1.2 million-square-foot facility on Friday. It was quite impressive from several viewpoints: 1) warehouse automation. 2) simplicity. 3) how they treat their people. 4) the power of continuous improvement. 5) their focus on the customer no matter the position. 6) quick deliveries. What else can you ask for in a tour?

Amazon has enormous power yet it didn't exist until 1994. They certainly are the epitome of innovation and demonstrate a customer-focused philosophy. No matter your position at Amazon, you are thinking about how your job relates to the customer. We can all try that on for size.

Do you think a day goes by that Amazon rests on its laurels and isn't thinking about the next big thing for their customers? I doubt it! What can we pick up from Amazon to boost our customer focus?

### One Tip to Implement:

Although Amazon has many intriguing aspects, their focus is on the customer – and therefore their employees. As smart companies know, it is impossible to have unhappy employees providing exceptional service to happy customers – at least for anything longer than a short duration of time.



Think about what you can do for your employees and teammates. How can you show them that you appreciate them? Can you champion for resources to support projects you know are important to them and will achieve results? Can you find outside classes that might benefit their career? Can you help them present ideas up the ladder?

Start by investing time in your employees. I bet that alone will yield substantial benefits – and feel better to boot. Find out how you and your employees can team up to provide a step level change in customer experience – and do it!

*At the core of Amazon's quick rise has been their relentless focus on the customer.*





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## 100 INNOVATIVE SERVICE

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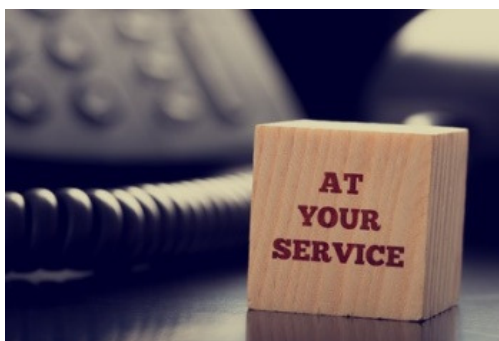
According to today's Wall Street Journal, Amazon is thinking of offering an unlimited reading service – a game changer! Amazon certainly epitomizes innovation as they continue to make waves with Sunday deliveries, the possibility of drones, and now unlimited reading services. According to my research study, the Amazon Effect, which measures the impact Amazon and other mega distributors has on service standards and how manufacturers and distributors should prioritize offerings, 67% of executives believe they have gaps.

I find that at least 80% of my clients experience these challenges on a daily basis. Customers are demanding quicker deliveries and elevated service levels. 24/7 availability is becoming an expectation. E-commerce is a must for many manufacturers, and certainly distributors.

Those who want to thrive will focus immediate attention on understanding what your customers need and how to set your supply chain and your people, processes and systems up for success.

### One Tip to Implement:

Pick up the phone and call a key customer, supply chain partner or someone with intimate knowledge of what your customers desire (such as your Customer Service Representative or Logistics Manager) and find out more about what would add value for your customers. Don't take what they say at face value. Probe a bit further to look for ways to provide value. Did anyone ask Sony to invent the Walkman (the



precursor to the iPod) or did Sony listen carefully and see this need? Certainly, most of us had no idea we'd need that type of device yet it is commonplace in our cell phones today.

I find that no matter how much I think I understand my clients' needs, I learn something new every time I probe further. Be curious and find out how you and your products help your customers. By learning about what's of value to them, you'll gain ideas about how to innovate and go the extra mile. Just the right suggestion or improvement can go a long way.

*Being innovative starts by understanding your customers' needs.*



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*I've Been Thinking...*

will provide daily inspiration of new thinking that will transform your business, your bottom line and you.

Armed with innovative ideas and partnered with Lisa's global experience, you can tackle your most challenging business and operational issues. In addition, these insights focus special attention on strategies to raise the bar and create customer loyalty, employee engagement, dramatic business transformation and collaborative partnership profits to thrive in today's competitive, fast-paced, 24/7 marketplace.



**Lisa Anderson**, also known as the [Manufacturing Business Transformer<sup>SM</sup>](#), and author of the soon-to-be-released *The Amazon Effect*, is a regular content contributor on topics including manufacturing and business performance, and has been interviewed for [articles in publications](#) like [Industry Week](#), [tED Magazine](#) and the [Wall Street Journal](#).

*I've Been Thinking is available as an ebook and in paperback through Amazon. For more information, visit <https://www.lma-consultinggroup.com/ibtbook>.*



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