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## Current Problems in Surgery

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## Foreword



Focused on the care of individual patients, surgeons of the past had little need for learning the science of performance improvement. However, with the growing complexity of healthcare, this has changed. Today we are being increasingly asked to bring more value to our patients by enhancing quality while reducing cost; in fact, it is our responsibility to address both the errors and the inefficiencies of healthcare. One way to do so is to embrace the science of performance improvement. In this issue of *Current Problems in Surgery*, Dr. Harry Sax from the Department of Surgery at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center has assembled a group of quality experts from around the country to provide a masterful perspective on this topic entitled, "Performance Improvement in Surgery." They begin with an historical perspective on performance improvement including process control, the Toyota production model, Lean, and Six Sigma. Next is a section on measuring and analyzing performance data. They then address the use of human factors analysis in surgery. Lean and Six Sigma are then described in significant detail. The use of Root Cause and Failure Mode and Effects analyses is then explained. The final section describes leadership behaviors that sustain performance. Their presentation is lucid and provides the balanced perspectives of experts in the field. This superb treatise is a significant addition to the literature on this subject and should become a valued resource for all surgeons engaged in performance improvement.

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