

## COVER STORY



# “With Lean, we have observed cost savings ranging from 5-15% of activity cost.”

- **Subodh Chandra Dixit**, Executive Director-Engineering & Construction, Shapoorji Pallonji and Company (SPCPL)

**SPCPL is the second largest construction company in the country. How is it setting the trend for practising Lean?**

SP E&C started its Lean construction journey in 2010 on a pilot basis. We have subsequently built momentum and expanded the programme. Currently, about a dozen of our construction projects across India are implementing Lean construction management. When a team is working as a unit and not in the traditional adversarial way that has existed in the construction industry, every stakeholder feels empowered to highlight areas where more value and quality can be obtained. As construction contractors, we continue to engage with owners, designers, architects, engineers, subcontractors and end-users to propagate Lean construction management and promote collaborative problem-solving. We have standardised software tools for project planning, communication, document management, reporting, snag/defect lists, etc. With this, all members of a project team can communicate, collaborate and contribute with real-time information and access.

**What benefits have you derived by practising Lean?**

The early stakeholder involvement process has resulted in improved coordination and smoother execution. On a project involving the top-down construction approach, a major departure from the conventional way of constructing a building from the



**Subodh Chandra Dixit**,  
Executive Director-Engineering &  
Construction, Shapoorji Pallonji and  
Company (SPCPL)

ground up, the Phase-1 facility was delivered within an aggressive timeline of about 17 months compared to an industry standard of 24 months for a similar facility and scope. The Phase 2 facility was delivered at an even more impressive timeline of just 13 months. Reduced wastage of resources and time are added advantages. On multiple projects involving aluminium formwork for monolithic construction, we have successfully achieved best floor-to-floor cycle times of three days and an average time of seven days as a direct benefit of pull planning implementation.

We are realising cost savings from two areas: Increase in productivity and reduction in wastage. In addition, any reduction in waste – be it actual material waste or procedural waste – results in overall efficiency of the project. Generally, we have observed that

such savings range from 5-15 per cent of activity cost depending upon the nature of the activity/project.

**As a director of ILCE, what is the value you perceive in spreading Lean concepts in India?**

The Indian construction industry loses heavily on account of non-productive work. This loss results from activities like looking for project data and information, conflict resolution and dealing with mistakes and rework. Construction contractors routinely suffer losses owing to inefficiencies. ILCE can play a pivotal role in this regard to bring all industry stakeholders together. The way Lean principles revolutionised productivity in the manufacturing industry, ILCE can continue to promote Lean construction as a framework that can boost productivity and thereby profitability for the Indian construction industry.

**Any message on Lean to the construction industry?**

Lean construction management principles allow construction companies to do more with less while delivering high-quality output to customers. Lean construction focuses on trust, respect and accountability throughout all aspects of the project at hand. Teams work together as a unit to uncover value, innovate, and align on goals from the beginning of the project. Collaboration during the construction process helps achieve better quality, enhanced safety, greater cost control and improved target accomplishment.