



ISE Department Advisory Committee (DAC)

Mr. Carson Hibbard



Chatting with my neighbor while watching a moving van pull up to his house, we reflected on not getting to know each other better. I knew he worked at Workday, but not much more. Over the next few minutes, we learned that we had two things in common, being Industrial Engineers and agreeing that Industrial Engineering (IE) is the best degree program you can go through! There is something special that happens when IE's meet. For me that starts with respect, as earning an IE degree requires work, dedication, and commitment to lifelong learning. My next reaction is to ask where they graduated. I think this comes from my pride in being an SJSU alumni. Finally, the conversation moves toward what industry(s) each of us have applied our skills. For me that was from tech to biotech and now healthcare. It's a special interaction when Industrial Engineers meet, one that to onlookers likely resembles two golden retrievers crossing paths, somehow knowing their connection.

In school, I always expected to work in high tech. Just after graduating with a B.S. in Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) in 2003, I accepted my first "career" job as a Global Design Planner for Kulicke and Soffa, a company manufacturing probe test cards. I left that job to focus on earning a private pilot instrument rating and an M.S. in ISE. In 2005, the day before graduation with the MSISE, I received a job offer from Microgenics, a small biotech company in Fremont that was soon to be Thermo Fisher Scientific. My job was to travel to the Camarillo site and learn the automation equipment as we would be integrating sites to Fremont. Within weeks I was developing validation procedures for massive water systems and packaging systems, testing the automation, and developing SOP's. My boss introduced me to ProModel and I began to love designing the proprietary elements that could not be shared with the automation manufacturers. My work expanded to designing product packaging and integrating packaging automation from business case through manufacturer design, site testing, integration, validation, and operator training. With a deep appreciation for continuous improvement, it was at Thermo Fisher that I began leading performance improvement teams. Before leaving the company in 2010, I was managing the PI program which was averaging over \$1M in savings each year.

Carson's story continues on the next page....



Carson Hibbard, cont.

I then transitioned to Kaiser Permanente's Regional Pharmacy Operations. This vast world of pharmacy consisted of all inpatient and outpatient pharmacies, central call centers and a massive, centralized pharmacy in Livermore and Downey that filled about half of all California prescriptions. Using shortest path algorithms and staffing models I was able to increase production in the NCAL central pharmacy by 11%, allowing downtime to implement preventative maintenance procedures on automation. Other interesting projects led to decreases in wait times at the call center and a massive time study across all the Kaiser pharmacies in SCAL.

Having family members who experienced how gaps patient care can impact a person's life, I knew then that I wanted to continue to apply ISE to the hospital setting. I became the consultant to the Chief Operating Officer of Antioch Kaiser. Here I learned about hospital flow and the key business metrics which hospitals adhere to. I drove achieving new efficiencies in length of stay and reduced delays in the lengthy discharge process, increasing care experience. Being able to pilot improvements in surgical care was another career highlight. Pioneering total joint recovery at Kaiser, we worked with patients to design optimal process which decreased the length of stay for total joint surgeries from 3.2 days to a day and eventually under one day. Waste reduction, Just in Time, Pull and a few ANOVA's really can drive improvements anywhere! As Kaiser partnered with Simpler Consulting, I benefitted from my Sensei coaching me on Value Streams and Rapid Improvement Events. This engagement led to achieving breakthrough results for patients. It was a delight to see patients walking hours after a surgery. I still recall one preoperative patient watching as another patient took his first steps with a new hip. "You'll be walking right here in a few hours too!" he said with a smile. "There's no way" was the reaction, but he did.

Addressing a gap in my career of managerial experience, I accepted the role of manager over General Surgery, Plastic Surgery and Wound Care in Walnut Creek. With 50 direct reports including receptionists, Medical Assistants, Nurses and Physician Assistants, I gained a deep understanding of operations while improving processes such as implementing negative pressure wound pumps to decrease healing time and implementing highly reliable processes for pathology samples.

That managerial experience is what enabled me to transition my current role as the Performance Improvement Practice Leader. I currently manage a department of Process Improvement Consultants and Project Managers. We have the privilege of improving the care of over 360,000 Kaiser members. Over the last three years I have been transitioning the team from a project shop to a strategy driven improvement program. We started by developing a strategy rooted in developing people. Our development and implementation of a daily management system including huddles was seen as a best practice and I was honored to be able to present this work at the 2023 Institute for Healthcare Improvement Forum. Now, focusing on strategy deployment with an eye on value streams, the goal is to empower our service area of more than 3,000 employees to all be problem solvers.

I owe so much of my life to SJSU and the ISE program. It opened the door to so many opportunities across various industries. It was at Thermo Fisher that I met my wife Kelly and now she also leads improvement at Kaiser Permanente.

The two of us live in Livermore and enjoy traveling and SCUBA diving. I recently added winemaking to my excessive list of hobbies, I also enjoy photography, woodworking, and reef aquariums among others.