Part III
Leading Operational Excellence: Outstanding Leadership

“Day by day, from April 1864 to April 1865, Grant fought Lee’s Army ... head-on ... He would not retreat ...; “I intend to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.” 1

“‘Ike’”, she remembered, “got out and just started walking among the men. When they realized who it was, the word went from group to group like the wind blowing across a meadow, and then everyone went crazy – the roar was unbelievable ... I stood by the car and watched as the General walked among them. ... He went from group to group and shook hands with as many men as he could. He spoke a few words to every man as he shook his hand, and he looked the man in the eye as he wished him success. ...” 2

Good leadership requires true dedication, persistency and to care about people. In this part of the book, we summarize various challenges to leadership, and ways to overcome them. After some theoretical considerations, we leave the stage to colleagues who have personally experienced such challenges, either by having led themselves, or by having closely observed leaders in their work. First, we provide some insights into transformational leadership based on a first-hand account from Pfizer. Next, we describe why and how to involve all organizational levels in the journey to Operational Excellence – including the middle management, which is often neglected yet vital for the success of an OPEX initiative. This is further emphasized by providing an insight into the true meaning and impact of HoshinKanri. The remaining parts examine characteristics of a good OPEX leader, and the leadership of OPEX on all company levels – from the global, over the regional to site responsibility. Together, these chapters clearly evidence the importance of leadership.

2 Kay Summersby (General Eisenhower’s driver) about a visit of Eisenhower to the 101st Airborne division the day before D-Day, cited from Korda, M. (2007): Ike – An American Hero, New York, p. 54f.