

Sunday Plenary Session

May 8, 2016, 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM; Venue: Salon IV & V

Dr. Mark L. Spearman, President and CEO of Factory Physics, Inc.

Abstract Title: Being Relevant in the Age of Analytics

Abstract: Operations Research became a discipline in World War II with the use of the scientific method to determine the best operational strategies to employ in submarine, air, and other forms of warfare. At the time, it was clear that the important discipline of Production and Operations Management coming out of OR would be world-changing, and would address all sorts of business and societal problems. While POM has been adopted in numerous areas, many would argue that it has yet to achieve its full potential.

Today, with the advent of “Big Data” and “Analytics”, it appears that the promise of POM will finally be realized. Indeed, it was not too many years ago that if one said the word, “analytics” in a pitch to industry, she would be dismissed and not invited back. Today, *analytics* is HOT!

So, in this talk, I would like to suggest methods to help make production and operations management more powerful, more meaningful, and its practitioners, more successful. I will focus on why some research is relevant and other research is not, thereby providing a means of judging relevance. I will then discuss some of the challenges facing big data and analytics, and conclude with a number of anecdotes that illustrate why it is more fun to be relevant and astute than just to be clever and smart.

Dr. Mark L. Spearman Biography:

Dr. Mark Spearman is President and Chief Executive Officer of Factory Physics, Inc., a firm that provides complete productivity solutions in manufacturing, health care, and construction management. In his former life as an academic, he was Head of the Department of Industrial Engineering at Texas A&M University, Professor of Industrial and Systems Engineering at Georgia Tech and Associate Professor of Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences at Northwestern University. He holds a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering.

For more than 25 years, his research and teaching has dealt with improving manufacturing operations and supply chain management. He is coauthor, with Wallace J. Hopp, of the book, *Factory Physics* that was named the IIE Book of the Year. He has helped more than one hundred companies apply the principles of factory physics to improve operations by increasing productivity, reducing cycle times and inventories by developing integrated supply chain approaches that are both simple and effective. He is passionate about the importance of manufacturing to society and of being relevant.

