

Can You See It??

Some people can “see” perfectly well without assistance, while some of us need to wear glasses or contact lenses. All of us need to use tools such as microscopes and telescopes to enhance our vision.

Waste is.....

Any activity that takes up time, resources, or space but does not add value to a product or service. An activity adds value when it transforms or shapes raw material or information to meet your customers’ requirements. Some activities such as moving materials during production are necessary but do not add value. A Lean Enterprise’s primary goal is to deliver quality products and services the first time and every time. As a Lean Enterprise, you accomplish this by eliminating all activities that are waste and then targeting areas that are necessary but do not add value.

With “Waste” we need to develop our eyes with training, to see and recognize the waste when it is in front of us. Some kinds of waste are obvious; even to a casual observer; other kinds of waste require “vision enhancement” tools.

You may have heard of some of these tools:

- 5S
- Visual Workplace Organization
- Value Stream Maps
- Standardized Work
- Operational availability
- Quick changeover
- Kaizen

Like eye glasses and telescopes, these are only some tools, not the goal. We need to change the way we “see” waste to be something tangible and well defined; to take advantage of small opportunities (not the elephants) to eliminate waste as our focus – one bite at a time.

The effects of waste are increased costs and decreased competitiveness. All goodhearted motives aside, we are in business to make money. In creating a Lean Enterprise, opportunities are often lost when our focus is limited only to the reduction of costs which are in front of us. If we use *the continuous improvement tools* they will help us “see” so much more.

To eliminate waste, begin by imagining a perfect operation in which the following exists:

- Products or services are produced only to fill a customer order—not to be added to inventory
- There is immediate response to customer needs

- There are zero product defects and inventory
- Delivery to customer is instantaneous
- All processes are next to each other for hand-off

What are the eight wastes? An easy way to remember them is to use the acronym - ***DOWNTIME***.

Defects – making of defective parts or correction. Repair, rework, scrap and inspection mean wasteful handling time and effort.

Overproduction – producing items for which there are no orders. This creates waste of overstaffing, storage and transportation of excess inventory. *This is a fundamental waste that causes most of the other wastes.*

Waiting – when a person waits for a machine, tool, material, another person or when a machine waits for maintenance, operator, material, etc.

Not Utilizing People – people not cross-trained; not having a system to generate ideas and input; lack of communication; irrelevant performance measures.

Transportation – the long distance moving of materials and tools which results in double and triple handling.

Inventory – excessive raw materials, finished goods, work in process and supplies which require extra handling, space and paperwork.

Motion – any movement that takes the person away from the value-added part of the job; which could be caused by setup of work.

Excess processing – unnecessary processing of work which could be caused by poorly designed parts, poor maintenance of equipment, poor instructions / training or the reworking of parts.

One of my favorite sayings is: “**If you always do, what you’ve always done, you’ll always get, what you’ve always got.**” We need to change what and how we do things to get the different results we want. The elimination of waste is a result, not a process.

The Heart of the Lean Production System: Eliminating Waste

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We will establish and regularly review quality objectives that drive the continual improvement of the quality system and the success of the business.