

# PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

**This is a pack of process improvement handouts that I have written, adapting both original source material and my own experience. Process improvement helps organisations to save money, reduce waste, improve throughput and get more from their resources.**

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Richard Maun  
Managing Director  
**Primary People Ltd**  
2009

# PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

## REMOVING EXCESS

### 1. PROCESS CHARTS

In order to make improvements to any process it is necessary to 'see the process' so that waste can be identified. All parts of the process which do not add value to the finished product or service are waste. Removing waste increases quality and profitability.

The following symbols can be used as a guide when constructing a Process Flow Chart. Identify all stages by asking "what happens next". When the chart is complete, add up the cumulative totals for time taken and distance travelled. Ask "which parts add value" and then **remove**, **simplify** or **combine** all those parts which are anything less than the bare minimum required.

PROCESS SYMBOL	STAGE	TIME SPENT	DISTANCE TRAVELLED	ACTION TO REMOVE OR REDUCE
<p>This is a sample only.</p> <p>Please purchase this product to see the rest of the detail.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>				

### 2

In the left and process right.

to halves. On the external customers example if modelling the accounts activity on the

When considering how external customers interact with an organisation it can be beneficial to produce a 'Cycle of Service' (Albrecht & Zemke in Service America!). This is drawn as a circle with all the events written at the points of the compass. Each event is a potential 'Moment of Truth' which a customer may experience.

### 3. MOMENTS OF TRUTH

A 'Moment of Truth' is a concept rather than a technique and its strength is that it takes account of customer experiences. Each MoT is a point of potential dissatisfaction for a customer, where they may be lost, or where they may be delighted and become a loyal customer. Customers build an *impression* of an organisation through the *cumulative* effect of many Moments of Truth.

In many service organisations, such as banks, delivery services, hotels, travel or consultancy there may be no tangible product which remains after the operation has been completed. The customer is left with a memory of the organisation.

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Also 80% of the problems are called 'The 80/20 Rule'. Aim to identify the 'vital few' and get rid of the 'worthless many'.

5) **Pokayoke.** Failsafing to stop errors becoming defects and being passed to the customer. Investigate each one of the following possible causes for error: Man (people) / Material / Machine / Method / Information. A failsafing device is usually an inexpensive device which undertakes 100% automatic inspection. These include *contact devices* such as parking height bars, or seat armrests, *fixed value devices* such as French fry scoops or pre-dosed medication units and *motion step devices* such as airline lavatory doors or in-store security tags.

6) **Deming Cycle.** This is abbreviated to **PDCA** – **Plan** (What is needed?) **Do** (Try out on a small scale) **Check** (Does it work?) **Act** (Implement and standardise). This cycle can sometimes be simplified to Check (what is going on) Plan (to improve it) Do (make the improvements).

**Take away message: If you can see it you can improve it.**

# WASTE

## REMOVING EXCESS

### IMPROVING CUSTOMER QUALITY

Within any business there is going to be some excess, which if removed can improve business performance. Stock levels can be reduced, quality can be increased, capacity can be freed up and on-time deliveries can be improved. All this leads to better use of working capital, more satisfied customers, an increased capacity to service new business and an increase in moral as staff spend more time on value adding activities. "How much inventory do we need?"

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in Japan  
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**6) Unnecessary Motions** – wastes time and money. Think about the ergonomics of your working environment and find out how much time is spent 'bending and stretching' to reach for items or to fit parts. How could the quality of your working environment be improved?

**7) Defects** – are costly in terms of time and materials. Defects also contain all the other 6 wastes because all resources put into producing the defect item are wasted. Take time to analyse the root cause(s) of the problem, systematise them, publicise them and invest energy into ensuring they are permanently removed from the system.



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**Take away message:** *Everything which does not add value is waste.*

# WASTE REDUCTION

## GETTING RID OF EXCESS

### TYPES OF WASTE

1. **Overproducing** - making too much.
2. **Waiting** - hanging around.
3. **Transporting** - moving boxes does not add value to products.
4. **Inappropriate processing** - adding extra details the customer will not pay for.
5. **Over**...
6. **Un**...
7. **M**...
8. **H**...
9. **C**...
10. **U**...
11. **P**...
12. **E**...



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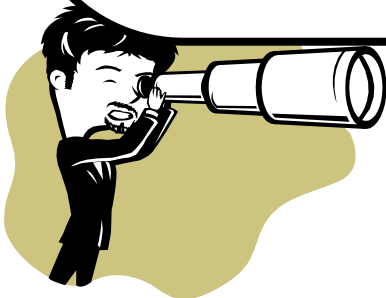
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### PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

#### Steps to Take

- 1. Collect your frustrations
- 2. Name the processes: think big and small
- 3. List / Map an easy process
- 4. Put out the waste: 50 deals / remove VAW
- 5. Celebrate success
- 6. Publicise new ways of working
- 7. Keep going



"If you can't measure it, you can't manage it."

"Anything above the absolute minimum is waste."

"If you can see it you can save it."

Ask yourself: "What do I see?"

# WORKPLACE ORGANISATION

## GOOD HOUSEKEEPING REDUCES WASTE

Take time to organise your workplace. The benefits include saved time, reduced defects and increased customer satisfaction, improved health, increased pride and greater productivity.

### The FIVE STEP Plan

There are five steps to take to successfully reorganise your workplace environment, in order to reduce the amount of time spent tripping over things, looking for things or buying 'some more' because items cannot be found!

#### Step 1) SORT – Cleanup to get started.

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**Think about your workplace:**

**Question 1** – What causes you frustration?

**Question 2** – What could you do to improve your workplace organisation?

**Question 3** – What elements of your work would you like to eliminate / simplify / combine?