



SupplyVelocity



Lean Meetings?

By Ray Davis

[Web: www.supplyvelocity.com](http://www.supplyvelocity.com)

Phone: (919) 345-8789

email: ray@supplyvelocity.com

“non-Lean” Meetings

- Do your meetings feel like they last forever and lack action and closure?
- Do you ever feel like you are a prisoner to too many meetings, running from one meeting to the next?
- Ever wonder why a meeting was called you were invited or other times why you weren't invited to a meeting you wanted to attend?
- Ever find yourself in a meeting after “the meeting” to discuss what did or didn't happen, or what needs to happen next?

You are not alone!

Lean Meetings

- Try thinking about meetings from a Lean perspective and perhaps you may consider changing your company's meeting culture.
- More specifically, lets think about meetings and apply Lean Quick Changeover principles and techniques.





Lean Quick Changeover Principles

- Maximize the “value added” or operational time of your constraint
- Prepare for constraint downtime while the constraint is operating
 - When possible, convert internal activities to external activities so they can be performed while the constraint is operating
- Minimize the downtime of your constraint
 - Only perform internal activities while the constraint is down
 - Streamline all internal activities to minimize constraint downtime

Identify the Constraint

- In our example, the employees working at the service company are the “constraint” so that when they are in meetings, they are not able to perform their core functions, therefore we treat meeting time as downtime.



Identify “Non Value Added” Time

- From a Lean perspective, meeting time is often a form of preparation for some other core process or effort. Seldom is the actual “value added” work done in the meeting.
 - Much like a welder organizing his tools and preparing to weld.
- Therefore our “Lean goal” would be too minimize the time spent in meetings so more time could be spent on “value added” activities.





Lean Principled Recommendations

- **Goal:** Meetings should be shorter
- **Recommendations:**
 - Provide an agenda with estimated times, for each attendee prior to the meeting
 - Consider a policy of NO agenda, NO meeting
 - Start on time and use a time keeper during the meeting to hold accountability



Lean Principled Recommendations

- **Goal:** Meetings should be more productive
- **Recommendations:**
 - Clearly establish the meeting's purpose with desired outcomes, prior to the meeting
 - Include the appropriate stakeholders for decisions and actions
 - Document attendee roles, actions, owners, due dates and next steps during the meeting and publish these to the group
 - Have the proper meeting support supplies and equipment to help make for a productive meeting experience
 - Chart paper, boards or smart boards for notes
 - Projectors or TVs for viewing presentation materials and other visuals



Lean Principled Recommendations

- **Goal:** Outcomes should be communicated
- **Recommendations:**
 - Document agreement, understandings and “action items”
 - Include names, next steps and dates
 - Send out meeting notes to attendees and other interested stakeholder



Lean Principled Recommendations

- **Goal:** There should be fewer meetings
- **Recommendations:**
 - Think about why you feel like there is a need for another meeting; If meetings are required due to poor or broken processes, fix the process!
 - Be respectful of the need for everyone to have time that is NOT spent in meetings; Schedule meetings well enough in advance for people to plan and coordinate their available time.
 - Consider a minimum 48 hour advance meeting notice rule
 - Track how much time you spend in meetings versus time spent NOT in meetings and trend this time downward.

Closing



- Look at meetings from a Lean perspective using Quick Changeover principles and techniques
 - Would your company benefit from less time spent in meetings and more time spent doing the more important core “value added” activities?
 - If not, does that suggest meetings might be trying to augment poor processes that are in need of some improvement?
- While this may not feel like it is leading edge stuff, you may find getting back to basics and having meetings under control may help you find the focus and executional success to tackle some more interesting challenges in the near future!

Article PDF

If you would like to download this complete article, visit our website:

www.supplyvelocity.com



SupplyVelocity

*For information on other Lean or Six Sigma Topics
or business improvement assistance in general, contact us:*

Ray Davis:

Phone: (919) 345-8789

email: ray@supplyvelocity.com

Mitch Millstein:

Phone: (314) 272-1236

email: mitch@supplyvelocity.com

Or visit our website at:
www.supplyvelocity.com