



SupplyVelocity®

5S Revisited: Engage People with Video Work Instructions

The foundational Lean Tool has new life, Standardizing with Video Work Instructions

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Abstract

5S is the most foundational of the Lean tools. It is also easy to start, generates a lot of excitement and is a good indication that Lean improvements are being sustained. However, as anyone who has done 5S knows, it sometimes falls apart. We call this the “First 3 S Syndrome.” Sort, Set-in-Order and Shine are fun, but the real benefit comes from the 4th S, *Standardization*. Standardization creates sustainable improvement and using Video Work Instructions, employee engagement.

After a quick overview of Lean and the 5S’s, we will discuss how to create employee engagement with Lean using Standardization as the driver.

3 Ways to Think About Lean

There are a few ways to define Lean that have been well accepted but create different visions for Lean and therefore different ways of making your company “Lean.”

Swift and Even Flow that Begins with the Customer

This version of Lean is very product oriented, evaluating Lean as a physical flow of products that begin with a customer pull. The process always begins with the customer, who defines value-added versus non-value-added work.

Identify and Eliminate Non-Value-Added-Steps

This version of Lean is the easiest to apply broadly across any industry. Every process has non-value-added steps that Lean Tools can identify so they can be eliminated. This improves labor productivity, increases throughput and makes processes faster.

Deep and Profound Respect for the People Who do the Work

Often overlooked is that the creators of Lean, and many people who built on the original work, felt a great respect for workers. This includes factory workers, warehouse workers, technicians, nurses, customer service reps, purchasing agents and more. They wanted to build a Lean culture of employee engagement to improve operations. This aspect has become more important to us as Lean Consultants.

New Life for 5S

For over 20 years we’ve implemented 5S at Clients because it is foundational... it is the right thing to do. However, we have been changing and are now using it to create standardization, while asking the people that do the work to create the standards using 5S.



1 Minute Lesson on 5S

- Sort: identify and remove clutter
- Set-in-order: a place for everything and everything in its place
- Shine: use cleanliness to identify sources
- Standardize: different people doing the same work the same way, in the safest and most efficient way – getting the same results
- Sustain: maintain the gains and create a foundation for further improvement

Standardization – The Way to Drive Employee Engagement in Lean

The first 3 S's are action oriented and generate a lot of excitement. However, they don't create sustainment. That belongs to the harder-to-implement, 4th S, Standardization. The best way we have found to standardize operations and get your people involved in Lean continuous improvement is by creating quick and simple video work instructions (VWIs). This has only been feasible in the last few years when almost everyone has a great video camera in their pocket.

Ask the People Who Do the Work

To create video work instructions, ask the people operating that workstation. Take 10 minutes and determine what story they want to tell. We like to begin with the purpose of that workstation. In the clip below, Martina, a Supervisor at Clean Uniform, explains first that the napkin folder presses and folds napkins for restaurants throughout St. Louis. She then goes through the process while explaining details of the machine and meeting quality expectations. If the operation is noisy then you can add the audio later. Video editing software is relatively easy to learn and use.

Keep Them Short

We recommend breaking down all operations into 5 – 10 minute video clips. Any longer and small mistakes become burdensome to re-shoot. If a mistake happens in a 5 – 10 minute video work instruction, it is a small thing to re-shoot the video. The same is true when operations change; short videos are easy to replace.

Everyone Can Be A Star

Many people love to “star in a show” and creating video work instructions gives them this opportunity. There is a lot of pride when a team-member is part of a company's standards. (Remember Lean is based on the “deep and profound respect for people who do the work.”)



Figure 1: Martina explains how to operate the Napkin Machine at Clean Uniform

Perfect is the Enemy of Progress

We never strive for perfect video work instructions. Shoot it, do some minor editing, such as adding the audio later (if the operation is noisy) and make it available to the workstation. If small imperfections are noted, use the spirit of continuous improvement and re-shoot the video. But don't let perfection stop you from making a useful tool available to your people.



Implementing the First 3 S's

When you create a video, it is human nature to make the area look great. We use Sort, Set-in-Order and Shine to make this happen. Therefore, making Video Work Instructions is something we do after the first 3 S's. And the video captures the area at its most organized, which you should use to help everyone understand the standard of organization at that workstation.

Do it Safely!

Another great "by-product" of the Video Work Instruction is safety improvements. While I never want perfection to hold up progress, we only want the safest process to become the standard.

Make VWIs Useful and Used

New employee training is a great use of VWIs but we like them to be available for everyone. The best way to do this is to make computers available at workstations and load the VWI on that computer as a shortcut from the network so they can be easily retrieved.

If you want to know how to use Video Work Instructions to give everyone a foundation to make further, sustainable improvements, I can be reached at mitch@supplyvelocity.com or 314-406-4962.