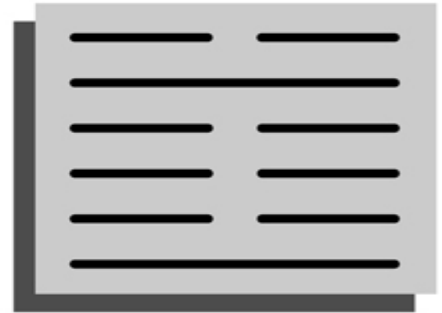


Change Management Associates



November 2014



Leader Standard Work It's More Than Just a Schedule

Dear Drew,

During recent delivery of our University of Michigan Lean Leadership program, as well as several other conversations over the past few months it is clear that there still remains some confusion about what constitutes 'Leader Standard Work' as well as its purpose. Several people asked, "Can't we just put it in Microsoft Outlook, LotusNotes or some similar program?" In this newsletter we'll take a look at this important concept and tool.

First let's discuss the purpose of leader standard work. As with any standard work it is to create consistency in how a process is to be performed - to create a standard or routine. Once the standard is created it allows for non-standard conditions to be more readily identified. A non-standard condition can be that the process was not performed in the way it was meant to be done, or it is taking longer than it should, or it is not being done at all. The non-standard condition can trigger a corrective response or constitute an opportunity for improvement in the process.

Leader Standard Work (LSW) is the standard or routine for a particular leadership role. It should include the activities that a leader is expected to perform. The activities should include those needed to 'run the business' - the day-to-day tasks necessary to support the value adding processes performed in the leader's area of responsibility. They should also include those activities necessary to 'improve the business' (more discussion later). It is not a job description. The time it should take to perform each activity can be included. Timing - specific points in time that an activity should be performed - should be included if important. Many 'running the business' type activities need to be performed at

Upcoming Events



CMA and our network affiliates have the following events scheduled:

AME Events:

Maximizing the Value of QMS in a Lean Environment

East Butler, PA

December 10, 2014

IDL Worldwide a subsidiary of Matthews International will host this event. After a tour of their advanced lean system, there will be a workshop on how to maximize the value of a Quality Management System.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Roundtable of Central NY Ithaca, NY

December 1, 2014

Come 'share, learn and grow' with fellow business professionals in a roundtable discussion on topics of the attendees choosing. [Click here](#) for more info.

particular times of the day, week or month. For example, there are typically beginning and end of the day or shift routines. In contrast, many 'improving the business' activities are not and should not be performed at specific times. For example, a leader will want to observe a particular process firsthand at different times in order to see if standard work for that process is being followed all the time.

Leader Standard Work should include details on how each activity should be performed. These are referred to as 'key points'. Details that matter on how an activity is to be properly done are included in leader standard work. For example, perhaps an activity is best performed using a visual management device, or a specific checklist should be used. These should be noted in the LSW. Included in the 'how' can be the people who should be involved so that the activity is performed effectively. The key points better insure that each activity is consistently and effectively done. It is also recommended to include the reasons for the key points. By noting the reasons, people are more likely to follow them over time.

Next, we'll expand on the 'improving the business' type activities. One category of these involve 'going to the gemba' - where work is performed. These are often referred to as 'gemba walks'. Gemba walks are not leaders meandering around the office or production floor. They must have a purpose - a focus. A focus can be to observe existing standard work in a collaborative way with team members performing it. Other possible foci are: to identify existing waste in a process that might be addressed; to take a 'pulse' of a process so that leaders can maintain general awareness and to help guide corrective action if necessary; to verify that workplace organization is being sustained; to identify particular issues that must be addressed by leadership; and others.

We also say 'don't walk alone'. Gemba walks represent learning and teaching opportunities for all participants. Recurring problems that may represent opportunities for improvement can be identified. Leaders can work to develop the problem solving and process improvement skills of associates. Leaders can provide guidance (but not specific direction), as well as convey specific or general business information. Further these interactions provide an excellent means to promote an environment of trust. As has been said, 'go see, ask questions, show respect'.

Gemba walks represent just one category of 'improving the business' type activities that should be included in leader standard work. Other activities include support of kaizen events, working on improvement projects, providing training to team members, participating in strategic planning processes, and similar such tasks.

Documenting a leader's routine and visibly posting it also insures accountability. As a recent participant in our on-site Lean Leadership program said, "writing it down makes the idea a commitment." True words indeed. Finally, process improvement should be practiced during creation of LSW just as with any standard work. A leader should ask three questions of each activity, typically of 'running the business' type activities: can it be eliminated? (nobody should perform it), can it be streamlined? (without undermining its intent), should it be re-assigned? (possibly

Lean Enterprise Institute Workshops

[Click here for information on all
LEI workshops](#)

Phoenix, AZ

November 18-20, 2014

Standard Work, Kaizen, Coaching,
VSM, and more.

Cambridge, MA

December 9-10, 2014

Strategy Deployment

Kata Summit

Fort Lauderdale, FL

February 18-19, 2015

Practitioner presentations,
keynotes, and more. [Click here for
a link to the website.](#)

University of Michigan

Lean Leadership

Ann Arbor, MI

March 2-5, 2015

Attendees will create Leader Standard
Work, Visual Management Systems,
initiate A3s and more as they work to
fill 'gaps' in their current Lean
Management Systems back in their
organizations. [Click here for info.](#)

Center for Healthcare Value Lean Leadership Series

Salem OR

April 21-23, 2015

Workshops include: A3 Thinking,
Coaching, Beyond Budgeting and
more. Come to a gemba visit to the
host Salem Health. [Click here for
more information.](#)

as a developmental opportunity for that person). Experience has shown that 1-2 hours per day can be freed up, thereby providing more time for 'improving the business' type activities.

Leader Standard Work has proven to be an effective tool to help people develop the requisite skills and habits to be a leader in a lean enterprise. So as you can see Leader Standard Work is much more than a schedule. I'm no expert but I don't see how you put all that has been described into one of the aforementioned programs. Or perhaps I need to take a class in one of them.

Best Regards

Drew Locher

Managing Director, Change Management Associates

University of Michigan Lean Leadership Program March 2-5, 2015, Ann Arbor MI

A second offering of the four-day Lean Leadership program was delivered in October to very positive reviews. The participants represented a wide range of industries and experience. Healthcare, education, financial services and manufacturing professionals were all in attendance. Participants took advantage of time provided to create visual management systems, leader standard work, and initiate A3s - all for real life application back in their organizations. Much sharing between the attendees also occurred throughout the week. All in all a great week and a great group.

The next offering will be March 2-5, 2015. [Click here](#) for more information.



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Be sure to check out our publications!

"Lean Office & Services Simplified"

(2012 Shingo Prize)

"The Complete Lean Enterprise"
(2005 Shingo Prize)

"Value Stream Mapping for Lean Development"

"Unleashing the Power of 3P"

Books are available at
www.productivitypress.com

Past Newsletters are available on the CMA website. Recent topics are:

"In Search of the Elusive Associate Engagement"

"Leadership - the X-factor"

[Click here](#) for a link to the newsletter page.

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