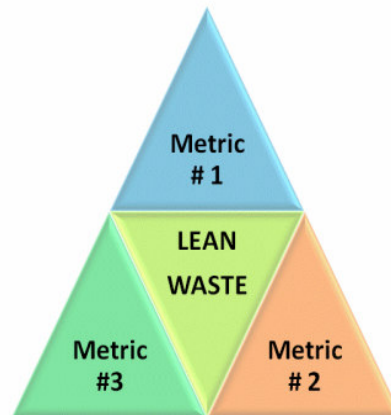


8 Lean Wastes--3 Optional Metrics for Each

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Base line measurements are necessary to track process improvement gains over time. These measurements are usually made during a current state assessment. Lets look at each Lean waste and brainstorm at least three measurements that can be made and re-measured to show process improvement and waste removal. As a review, the 8 lean wastes are:



- Overproduction
- Transportation (conveyance-moving with something)
- Unnecessary motion (moving but not transporting anything)
- Waiting
- Unnecessary processing
- Excess inventory (specimens, supplies and reagents)
- Defects (corrections)
- Not using the knowledge and intellectual ability of staff (ignoring talent)

Metrics to measure overproduction:

1. Number of specimens delivered per hour
2. Number of batches per shift
3. Batch size passed between each process step

Metrics to measure transportation waste:

1. Steps associated with tube-travel diagrams
2. Time and distance specimens spend in courier cars
3. Distance your staff travels carrying reagents and supplies

Metrics to measure wasted motion:

1. Travel distance associated with completing all process steps one time
2. Spaghetti diagrams of your staff during peak operation times.
3. Walking distance to areas where materials, supplies, and/or specimens are obtained.

Metrics to measure the waste of waiting:

1. Telephone time spent waiting to relay a critical results
2. Length of time patients wait for outpatient phlebotomy
3. Length of time technologists spend waiting for specimens

Metric to measure the waste of over processing:

1. Count the number of times specimens are sorted in specimen processing
2. Count the number of times technologists sort specimens before placing them on an analyzer
3. Count the number of times specimens are sorted before being placed into storage

Metrics to measure the waste of inventory:

1. Measure staff hours spent on ordering
2. Measure staff time spent on rotating stock
3. Measure the amount of consumables you have stored in the laboratory vs. in the store room

Metrics to measure defects passed downstream:

1. Track defects passed downstream from process step to process step
2. Count the number of corrected reports per day
3. Count the number of specimens that required clean-up (re-spun, redraw, re-label, etc.) prior to analysis per analyzer

Metrics to measure foregone use of staff talents:

1. Count the number of process improvement suggestions received each day from staff
2. Measure staff morale and satisfaction levels
3. Count the number of continuing education hours devoted to training your staff on process improvement methodologies and and project management

These are just a few of the many baseline measurements that can be used to follow your process improvement journey.

