

Kaizen Event: Any action whose output is intended to be an improvement to an existing process.

Kanban: A Japanese term which means card signal. Kanban is the information signal used to indicate the need for material replenishment in a pull production process.

Lead Time: The total time a customer must wait to receive a product after placing an order.

Lean: A business practice characterized by the endless pursuit of waste elimination.

Lean Team Leader: This person usually has a job title like: Lean Champion, Lean Lead, Lean Coordinator, Lean Master, or Operations Supervisor.

Poka-yoke: Japanese word that refers to a mistake-proofing device or procedure used to prevent a defect during the production process.

Pull Production: Products are made only when the customer has requested or “pulled” it, and not before.

Push System: Product is pushed into a process, regardless of whether it is needed.

Sanitizing: The act of cleaning the work area.

Set-up Reduction: Reducing the amount of time a machine or a process is down during changeover from the last good piece to the first good piece of the next product.

Shojinka: Continually optimizing the number of workers in a work center to meet the type and volume of demand imposed on the work center.

Six Sigma: A methodology and set of tools used to improve quality to than 3.4 defects per million or better.

1. Black Belt—Six Sigma team leaders responsible for implementing process improvement projects within the business.
2. Green Belt—This is someone who has been trained on the improvement methodology of Six Sigma who will lead a process improvement or quality improvement team.

Takt Time: Daily production number required to meet orders in hand divided into the number of working hours in the day.

Total Productive Maintenance (TPM): Maximizing equipment effectiveness and uptime throughout the entire life of the equipment. This key term is also described as follows:

1. A method for continuously improving the effectiveness of manufacturing processes and equipment through the involvement of all the people in the organization.

Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) continued:

2. How does it improve customer satisfaction? The goal is to maintain production equipment to provide 100% on-demand availability to the next process or customer.

3. It is also an improvement system that incorporates and builds on Lean tools such as 5S, visual controls, poka-yoke and others.

Toyota Production System (TPS): A methodology that resulted from over 50 years of Kaizen at Toyota. TPS is built on a foundation of Leveling, supported by Just-in-Time and Jidoka.

Two-Bin System: An example of both visual management and the pull system, whereby two bins or containers are used to trigger reorder of parts or materials.

Value Analysis: Analyzing the value stream to identify value added & non-value added activities.

Value Stream: A value stream is a series of all actions required to fulfill a customer's request, both value added and not.

Value Stream Mapping (VSM): This is the process of directly observing the flows of information and materials as they now occur, summarizing them visually (mapping), and then envisioning a future state with much better performance.

Value-Added Work: Work that the customer is willing to pay for. A transformation of the shape or function of the material/information in a way that the customer will pay for.

Visual Factory/Control & Management: The placement in plain view of all tools, parts, production activities, and indicators of production system performance so everyone involved can understand the status of the system at a glance. Often involves use of labeling.

Waste: Anything that uses resources, but does not add real value to the product or service.

Water Bug (water spider): This is the skilled and well-trained person who makes the rounds supplying parts, assisting with changeover, providing tools, and materials.

Work Cell: A grouping of equipment and/or people in a work environment that is dedicated to the completion of work tasks that are common (*also called a “Production Cell”*).

Work in Process (WIP): Product or inventory in various stages of completion throughout the plant from raw material to completed product.

Yield: Produced product related to scheduled product.