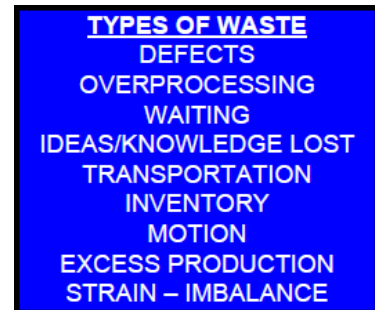
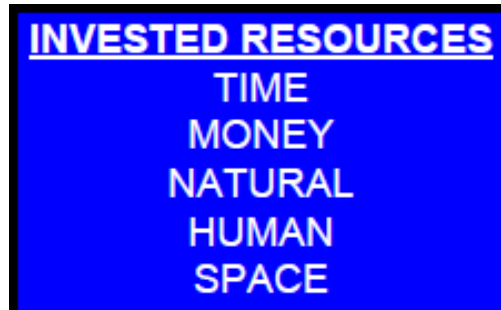


The Lean Blitz Assessment Process

Just like using a map, with continuous improvement it's important to know from where you're starting and where you want to end up before defining the route and journey you intend to follow. The roadmap for continuous improvement requires identifying where we need to be and comparing it to where we are today.

It is ideal to get a snapshot of the current state of business operations with regard to how well we're performing against the expectations set forth by ourselves and our partners, whether they are customers or suppliers, or if those entities are internal or external. The snapshot should tell us our partnership expectations, what we are investing to meet those expectations (our costs), and the inefficiencies in our processes that are absorbing costs but aren't providing value. We take this snapshot of the current state using an initial, independent, unbiased assessment process.

On-Site Assessment



The Lean Blitz Consulting assessment process is focused on the business results arising from partnership expectations and how productive we are with our resources in order to meet those expectations, and not about deployment of continuous improvement tools. The assessment generally consists of a one-day on-site evaluation of processes, resources, and productivity and is as non-disruptive as possible so that production or value-creating activity can continue. Following the Lean Blitz Continuous Improvement Framework, we examine the following categories:

Partnership Expectations

All businesses must create value for partners and customers in order to exist. From a safety, quality, and delivery standpoint what is expected of us and how do we know we're successful in meeting those expectations? Here we confirm that the metrics we are using are meaningful and the right ones, they are being measured and acted upon appropriately, and that everyone up and down the organizational chart knows how their responsibilities affect those metrics. We also examine qualitative or subjective expectations that are hard to measure and quantify where appropriate. Our partners are not interested in our costs to meet expectations – they are mostly influenced by our ability to provide quality results.

Invested Resources

Here is where we examine what it actually costs us to meet those partnership expectations. The investments of time and money must be as productive for us as possible. Money can buy the time of employees and associates, natural resources, machines, and space. However, time is a non-renewable resource and can never be recouped if it is wasted.

Types (and Quantities) of Waste

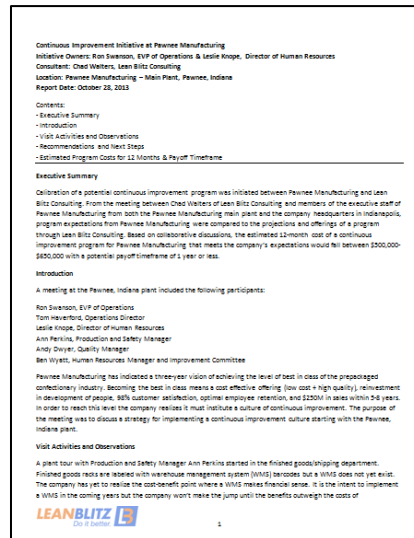
The costs and invested resources put forth to meet partnership expectations are used in two ways: to add value and to be wasted. Every process features both value-adding elements and non-value-adding elements. Those non-value-adding elements are the Lean wastes. They absorb resources but don't provide value to the customer or are things for which the customer is unwilling to pay. For example, customers do not want to pay for defective materials or products, but suppliers and their processes invest resources in producing those defects whether they are aware of it or not. The Lean

wastes cost us time and money, and identifying those wasteful activities and quantifying their impact on processes and business results are part of the assessment process.

Besides the three categories from the Continuous Improvement Framework, we will also look to identify other elements that would be contributing factors to business success (or lack thereof):

- **Leadership support** – how involved is leadership in support of improvement?
- **Process ownership/responsibility** – who is held accountable for the results of each process?
- **Communication methods** – how is information communicated across and up-and-down through the organization?

Assessment Deliverables



The end result of the on-site assessment will be a full assessment report that recaps what expectations/metrics, costs, and wastes were observed through meetings, examinations, calculations, and estimations. The assessment report will contain those observations plus recommended follow-up actions or potential projects to tackle based on cost-benefit analyses, as well as the potential costs and timeline for recommended projects. The report will be completed and delivered to the primary client contact within five business days, after which a plan of improvement actions or projects can be discussed and scheduled.

Assessment Requirements

While the assessment is as non-disruptive to operations as possible, it is imperative to work with all employees to learn about their processes and acquire their feedback. Assessors need to ask questions and gain access to requisite data in order to provide the best report feedback and recommendations as possible. Assessors will require time with organizational leadership, including highest ranking official on site, access to personnel who can provide requisite data, and front line employees and supervisors. Assessors will spend time standing back and monitoring processes.

The assessment is the first step in defining the start and projected finish of the journey. Before any discussion of improvement ideas is initiated, the assessment must be completed. If the client begins a contracted consulting agreement with Lean Blitz Consulting for one week or more in duration, the cost of the initial assessment is rolled into the consulting fees.