**WASTE WALK**

**Purpose**

A Waste Walk is a structured observation of a process to identify all the waste (e.g. activities that don’t add any value) involved in the process. By identifying waste and then brainstorming how each waste could be mitigated or eliminated, this tool helps to uncover continuous improvement opportunities and improve the efficiency of a process.

The acronym D.O.W.N.T.I.M.E. is used to categorize wastes into 8 different waste types: Defect, Overproduction, Waiting, Non-utilized Talent, Transportation, Inventory, Motion, Extra Processing. Definitions of each of these waste categories are provided in the Waste Walk Template below.

**How to Facilitate**

1. Define the purpose of the Waste Walk to align the team.
2. Review the Waste Walk Template and ensure that team members understand the waste category definitions.
3. Conduct the Waste Walk by visually observing the process and documenting any waste observed.
4. Collate all waste observed from the team (e.g. it can be useful to capture these on sticky notes on chart paper, with one waste per sticky note) and facilitate the assignment of each waste to the appropriate waste category. Note that not all types of waste may be observed and some waste may fall into more than one category. In this latter case, don’t get too caught up in determining the correct category of waste; it is more important that waste is identified.
5. Identify the impact on performance as low, medium, or high in order to help prioritize which waste to address.
6. For each waste identified, brainstorm potential solutions to eliminate or mitigate the waste.

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|  | **Waste Category** | **Definition** | **Observation** | **Impact on performance (“High”, “Medium”,” Low”)** | **Potential Solutions** |
| **D** | **Defects** | Defects and mistakes that require fixing or replacing |  |  |  |
| **O** | **Overproduction** | Making more than required |  |  |  |
| **W** | **Waiting** | Waiting for information, supplies, people |  |  |  |
| **N** | **Non-utilized Talent** | Not properly utilizing people’s experience, knowledge, skills, or abilities |  |  |  |
| **T** | **Transportation** | Unnecessary movement of information or materials |  |  |  |
| **I** | **Inventory** | Holding and creating excessive stock |  |  |  |
| **M** | **Motion** | Excess movement |  |  |  |
| **E** | **Extra Processing** | Unnecessary or unproductive steps in the process |  |  |  |

**EXAMPLE WASTE WALK – Baking a Custom Cake**

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|  | **Waste Category** | **Definition** | **Observation** | **Impact on performance (“High”, “Medium”,” Low”)** | **Potential Solutions** |
| **D** | **Defects** | Defects and mistakes that require fixing or replacing. **Where in the process are defects occurring?**  | Baking powder had expired and cake did not rise | High | Purchase fresh baking powder every 6 months  |
| **O** | **Overproduction** | Making more than required. **Is the amount being produced more than required?**  | More frosting was made than used | Medium | Calculate how much frosting is needed to decorate one cake and scale frosting recipe back  |
| **W** | **Waiting** | Waiting for information, supplies, people. **Are there any delays in the process?** | Had to wait for oven to get to temperature | Low | Turn oven on before starting to mix ingredients |
| **N** | **Non-utilized Talent** | Not properly utilizing people’s experience, knowledge, skills, or abilities. **Are employees properly trained?** | Baker’s assistant did not know how to bake a vegan cake  | High | Train baker’s assistant or have them take a baking class |
| **T** | **Transportation** | Unnecessary movement of information or materials. **Can time or travel be reduced?**  | Had to go back to grocery store twice to get ingredients | Medium | Double check the shopping basket with the shopping list before leaving the store to make sure all ingredients were purchased  |
| **I** | **Inventory** | holding and creating excessive stock. **Excess inventory?**  | Too many ingredients: baking powder, sugar, etc.  | Low | Clean expired/old ingredients out of the pantry before I buy more ingredients.  |
| **M** | **Motion** | Excess movement. **Are workstations optimized?** | Went to pantry to get ingredients 4 times in the process | Medium | Get all needed ingredients from pantry before mixing |
| **E** | **Extra Processing** | Unnecessary or unproductive steps in the process. **Are standards and directions clearly defined?**  | Wrote down customer order on a piece of paper then re-wrote order in customer order book. Had to call customer back because did not capture all require information the first time. | Low | Fill out customer order book with order information immediately while customer is still on the phone |