



Gemba

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Get to the Gemba

The power of Gemba Walks

- Understand what Gemba is and isn't
- Why every organization needs it
- Key elements to executing a Gemba walk
- Tips for success and actions going forward

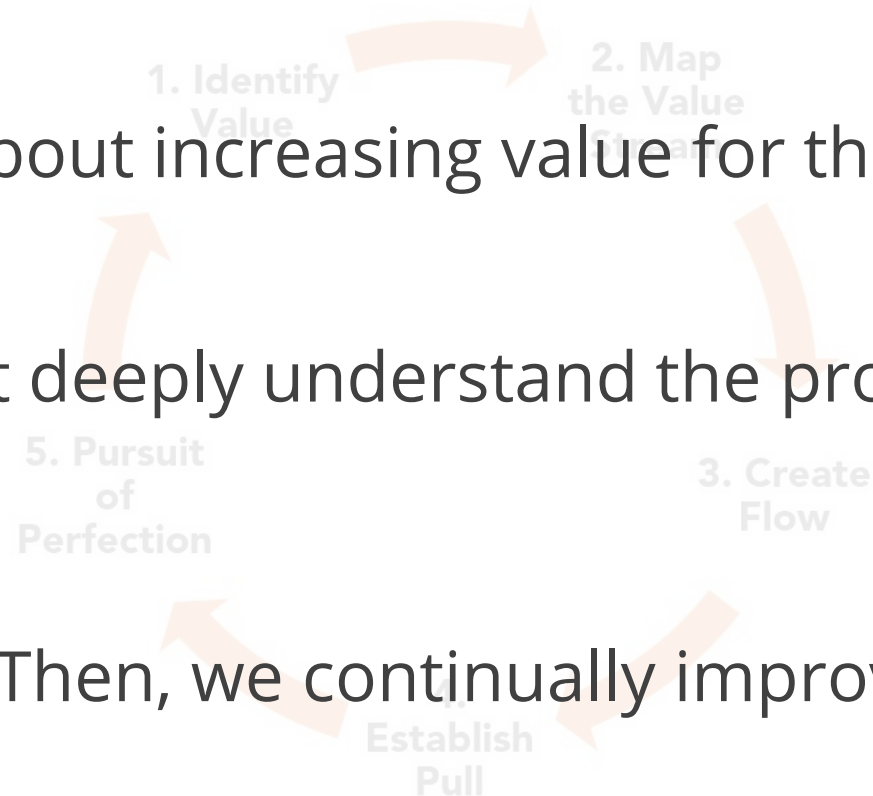


Lean

Lean is about increasing value for the customer.

To do this, we must deeply understand the process, product, and service we provide.

Then, we continually improve.



Gemba + Lean

- Gemba (or genba) Japanese term meaning “**the real place**”.
- Incorporated into **lean manufacturing principles** in the mid to late 90’s by Toyota executives.
- Intended to get leaders **closer to the creation of value**.
- Application expands beyond manufacturing to any **place where work gets done**.



What is it?

Direct Observation

Observational Voice of the Customer

Gemba Walks denote the action of going to see the actual process, understand the work, ask questions to understand, and learn.

Value Stream Walk

Management Surveillance

Management by Walking Around

What is it NOT?

- Time to evaluate employee performance.
- Opportunity to quickly implement a change to the value stream.
- An event that doesn't include employee input.
- Gotcha walk looking for items out of standard.
- Audit with official inspection criteria.



Where are they done?

- Gemba Walks take place where the work gets done.
 - Policeman/woman → crime scene
 - News Anchor → newsroom floor, on location reporting, control room
 - Office → computer station , meeting room, mail room, reception
 - Hospital → waiting room, operating room, office
 - Store → Retail floor, customer service desk
 - Manufacturing → production floor, warehouse

Gemba Walks may have originated on the production floor, but they can, and should, be applied to any place where work gets done.



Why do we need it?



- Improve our understanding and gain alignment
- Develop empathy.
- Opportunity to learn from others.
- Identify problems and solutions.
- Connect with the people executing the process.
- Drive increased value for our customer and our people.

Key Elements

1. Go see
2. Ask why
3. Show respect



Go See

Approach:

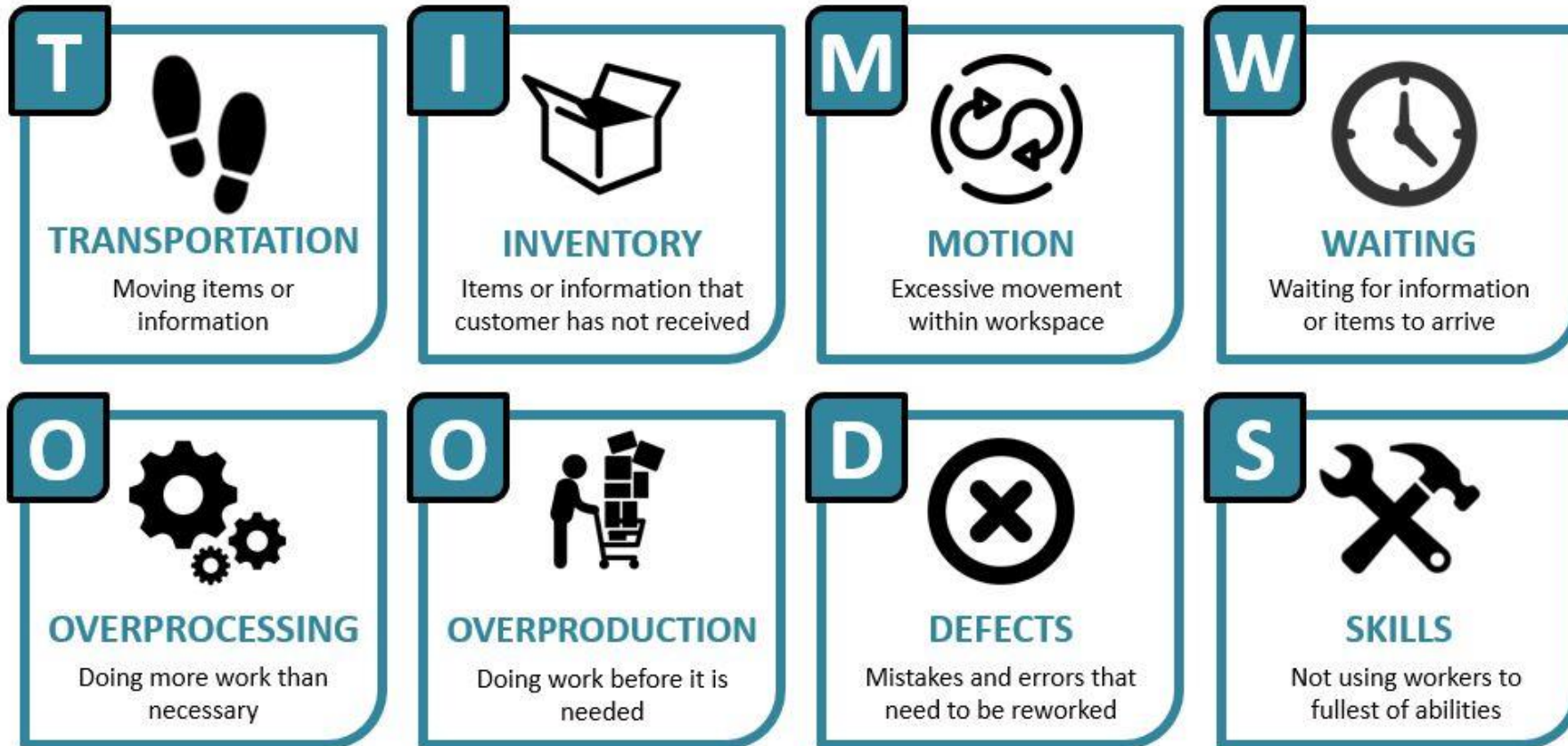
1. Identify the location for your observation.
2. Communicate your intentions and plan to the team.
3. Protect the time.
4. Follow the value stream.



Key Tip:

You are there to observe and learn from those closest to the work. Be mindful of how you show up and the impact you will have.

Go See: **Look for Waste**



Awareness Test

Ask Why

Approach:

1. Generate a list of open ended questions before hand. What do you want to learn?
 - *If there is a specific issue you want to learn more about, bring detail to share ask others about.*
2. Capture what you see and hear during the walk.
3. Bring others along as appropriate.

Key Tip:

Focus on the process not the people. Gemba walks are about observing, understanding, and improving processes.

Ask Why: Questions to Ask

- Is there a standard process for completing this task?
- What are your top pain points with this task/process?
- What are common problems?
- How can you fix the problem?
- Who do you contact if you need help or have an issue?
- What improvements do you think need to be made?



Show Respect

Approach:

1. Thank the team for the observation time and discussion.
2. Follow up with employees and share what you learned.
3. Repeat the process. Mix up the schedule to gather insight to how the process changes depending on the person or time/day it is being executed.

Key Tip:

Respect for people is at the center of lean and the Gemba Walk is an opportunity to demonstrate it. Be candid, caring, and curious.

Show Respect



When you are out observing on the gemba, do something to help them. If you do, people will come to expect that you can help them and will look forward to seeing you again on the gemba.

— *Taiichi Ohno* —

AZ QUOTES

Show Respect

Gemba Walks can help to build trust and they can also break it if not executed properly.

- Leadership presence can change behaviors and actions.
- Invest in the creation of **psychological safety**:
 - Be transparent
 - Remind that you are there to learn and remove barriers
 - Encourage the team to share
 - Focus on the process not the people
 - Act based on facts rather than assumptions



Bring It All Together

Go See

1. Identify the location for your observation.
2. Communicate your intentions and plan to the team.
3. Protect the time.
4. Follow the value stream.

Ask Why

5. Generate a list of open ended questions before hand. What do you want to learn?
6. Capture what you see and hear during the walk.
7. Bring others along as appropriate.

Show Respect

8. Thank the team for the observation time and discussion.
9. Follow up with employees and share what you learned and any next steps that were identified or discussed.
10. Repeat the process.

Guarantee Success

- Build Gemba Walks into your normal routine.
- Leverage Gemba Walks to go deeper.
 - Safety incident, quality issues, customer complaint, team issues etc.
- Bring others along on the walk to learn and calibrate.
- Follow through on commitments and actions.
- Don't suggest changes during the walk and ensure the focus is on learning.
- Empower others to do the same - *"How do you know? Have you seen it?"*
- Always focus on process in support of your people.



Apply



- Start small to get comfortable and build your skills.
- Be open minded - Work gets done in all places, forums, and venues.
- Think about how you can “see” your process in action.
 - Go the to meeting.
 - Sit in on the discussion or system transaction.
 - Walk the area with subject matter experts.
 - Get to the customer service area.
- Act of facts not assumptions.

There is no one size fits all for Gemba Walks. Consider the approach, focus on your process, and support your people.

Call to Action

Plan your next Gemba Walk:

1. List the processes, systems, and work practices that you support.
2. Down select from your list and pick one for your first Gemba Walk.
3. List “how” you will observe and who you will need to make aware of your Gemba Walk plans.
4. List timing options.
5. Write 3 – 5 questions you will ask.
6. Set yourself a reminder to do it!

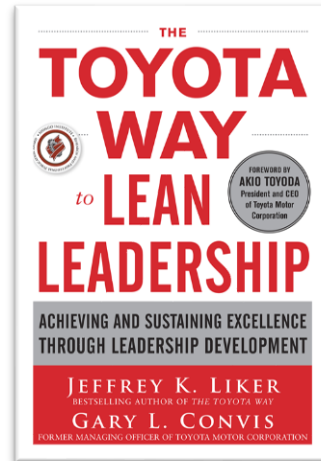


"As a leader there is nothing more important, startling, and helpful than seeing the truth."

- Stephen Buccilli

Where to learn more

- The Toyota Way



- Gemba Academy



- Lean Enterprise Institute



Questions

