



# Continuous Improvement Toolkit

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## Standard Work

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**Standard work** means working on standards to produce correct and consistent results. It represents the best sequence and the most efficient methods to perform a process. It is considered a way to achieve the highest possible degree of consistency in any process. The purpose is to ensure that everything is done by everyone in a similar manner and carry out the work that achieves the highest quality, best service and lowest cost possible.



Standard work is one of the important elements of lean thinking and is essential for lean to succeed. It is however one of the least used lean techniques and is often neglected by many lean practitioners. Lean organizations rely on standard work in order to allow just-in-time production and delivery, and to create a baseline from which they can improve. Where there are no standards, there can be no improvement. Each time a standard is improved, it becomes the basis for future improvements.

Standard work is an important part of any sustainable improvement effort. Standardization is a way of maintaining improvements achieved during improvement activities. Successful solutions must be standardized in order to remain effective over the long term. Many times we come to a situation where a closed project is reopened. This indicates that the problem was not effectively dealt with or there were no actions taken to sustain the gains.

Lack of standard work is a significant source of variation in any process. Processes should be repeatable and predictable so that variability is kept to the minimum. With increased repetition and consistent

<i>Standard Operating Procedure</i>	<i>Work Instruction</i>
<i>One Point Lesson</i>	<i>Best Practice</i>

steps, quality will occur on a reliable and predictable manner. Individuality maybe a good thing, but not when is comes to managing processes as this will cause inconsistent results and will lead to customer dissatisfaction. By ensuring work is always done the same way, productivity will improve, lead time will decrease, and errors and wastes will be reduced.

Standard work provides a method to document the process information in a written format. It is also considered a very useful learning tool. It provides enough information so that new comers and workers on the job can use them to do their work more efficiently. Sharing this information creates a safer working environment, clarifies roles and promotes problem solving and teamwork. It is also an approach to document and share best practices at both local and global levels.



**Standard work is a combination of methods, tools and documents**

Standard work can be embedded in the company’s operation through the use of **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**. An SOP is a document that describes the best way to execute a process and its activities to maintain consistent working practices. It represents the what will be done, how it will be done, and who will be responsible for making sure it gets done. Developing and implementing SOPs enable standard work to be effective and help communicate it to those working in the process. SOPs are often used in improvement projects to document the project solution in order to sustain improvements made.

Standard work and SOP documents may contain written instructions, drawings, flowcharts, photographs, checklists, or any other information needed to clearly communicate the standard. They usually include:

- The description and scope of the work.
- Why things are done in a certain way.

Title:	Process:
Objective:	Scope:
Definitions:	Responsibilities:
Safety issues:	Related docs.:
Procedure:	

- The exact work sequence involved in which activities are completed.
- The optimal amount of time needed for each activity.
- The rate at which products must be produced to meet customer demand.
- Responsibilities and work distribution.
- Key points related to safety, quality and performance.
- The materials, equipment and tools needed to complete the work.
- A revision control system.

Standard work documents should be created by consensus of those who actually do that work. People support what they help to create. These documents should be posted in the place where the work is being done. This will help employees remember the proper activity sequence and ensure workplace standards are clearly visible and consistently adhered to by all. Visuals are used to demonstrate difficult concepts and reinforce the standard work. You should, however, ensure that visual design and color standards are being applied consistently throughout the workplace.

## Developing and Implementing SOPs:

The following steps can serve as a guide to developing and implementing an SOP:

- With your team, clearly describe the purpose for writing the SOP (lean deployment, training, document project solution, etc.).
- Understand the existing system for standard work.
- Get permission to conduct gemba walks and talk to the people there.
- Prepare the documents to collect the desired information (e.g., checklists, flowcharts, etc.).

- Collect data, observe actual practices, interview people and ask questions.
- Analyze the current process and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Write the SOP in a simple and visual way.
- Test and review the draft SOP with the process performers, get inputs from them and modify as necessary.
- Approve the SOP then post it in the workplace.
- Train or re-train everyone as necessary to follow it exactly.
- Monitor for effectiveness and compliance.

## Examples:

Label Changeover (Machine: 6 colors Decorator Rutherford)	
<b>Benchmarks (label changeover time):</b> Division: 18.7 minutes Plant: 31.5 minutes	
<p><b>Pre-Checks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are magnetic cylinders prepared and in good condition?</li> <li>• Are the blankets checked and prepared?</li> <li>• Are the plates ready and checked?</li> <li>• Are the solvent buckets in place?</li> <li>• Are the inks buckets ready?</li> <li>• Are the scrap bins empty and ready?</li> <li>• Are team members ready and in proper position?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Team Roles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Group leader:</b> review pre-checklist, coordinate, monitor and check samples.</li> <li>• <b>2<sup>nd</sup> man:</b> clean fountains, remove the old cylinders, apply new inks and put the new cylinders.</li> <li>• <b>3<sup>rd</sup> man:</b> clean inkers, stop and run the machine, change the plates and blankets, and apply solvent.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Procedure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get design requirement.</li> <li>• Stand-up meeting and review pre-checklist.</li> <li>• Stop the line.</li> <li>• Clear the line.</li> <li>• Apply label changeover as per instructions.</li> <li>• Registration and color adjustment.</li> <li>• Run the line.</li> <li>• Prepare the label changeover report.</li> </ul>	

### Standard work document for a manufacturing process (label changeover)

Process: Order processing			
Activity	Time	Key points	Flowchart
Enter the customer information	1-1.5 minutes	Create a new customer if not exist (5-8 minutes)	
Enter order information	1-2 minutes	All starred field must be filled	
Retrieve item from stock	2-5 minutes	Load the heavy items into the customer's car	
Print out the invoice and hand it to the customer	0.5-1.5 minutes		
Total time: 4.5 – 10 minutes (8.5 – 16.5 for new customers)			

### Standard work document for a service process (order)

processing)

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