

Learning to See Waste with the Gemba

This half day, Level 1 course focuses on learning how to recognize various forms of waste in our processes and to work with others to understand and benefit from differing perspectives, methods and knowledge. Delivered through a presentation, interactive dialogue, and field exercises, participants will learn ways we can collaboratively see waste and work towards eliminating waste to create value.

The course is best suited for anyone embarking on their Lean journey, or anyone who wants to review inquiry-based ways to explore processes to make improvements in the construction industry.

Learning Outcomes

Seeing waste is about asking big questions:

“What is the purpose of this process?” “Who is responsible for it?” “Is this process achieving its purpose and, if not, in what ways is it failing?” “What are the causes of these failures?” “How are the people touching the process consulted and engaged in improvement?” Participants will learn the importance of going to the Gemba (where the work is done) and learn to see waste as a team, asking questions to get to root cause and making improvements – together – to create value in our processes.

Course Content

Going to the Gemba is about going to where the work is done and gaining a clear understanding of what and why things are being done in a certain way. It is about discovering and exploring inefficiencies collaboratively with the people involved with doing the work, to remove wastes, to increase value, and to improve working conditions for the workers.

This workshop will:

- Introduce the practice of the Gemba Walk
- Review and understand the 8 waste types
- Work through the Gemba Sequence, either virtually or in the field
- Introduce tools and techniques for spotting wastes & exploring root cause
- Mapping value and developing counter measures to improve the work
- Review case studies and past improvements made on various sites

Simulations may include:

- Virtual Waste Walk
- Drawing Toast
- 5 Whys
- Field Gemba Walk (volunteer by local active construction site required!)

Seeing waste takes practice and requires a team to be open and honest about what they see, and a trusting and willingness for workers to be questioned about their work. It requires that team members ‘get’ that by asking questions we create understanding, and that seeing waste is an opportunity to learn and improve. This course aims to provide a means to create this open team-learning environment, in order to increase value, by seeing and eliminating those wastes in our processes.