



A Practitioner's Guide To
Lean Manufacturing – 5S Edition

The 5S System

- The 5S system establishes a culture that is focused on creating a clean, organized, and safe work environment.
- This is accomplished through a combination of:
 - waste elimination exercises;
 - visual controls; and
 - standard work procedures.
- The 5S system is an excellent tool for firms just beginning their lean transition.

The 5S System (Cont.)

Results Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Establishing standard work practices while improving quality.
- Freeing up wasted floor space.
- Eliminating the search for items, tools, etc.
- Improving process flow.
- Establishing work teams.
- Reducing inventory by establishing realistic needs for raw materials, supplies, tools and other equipment.
- Changing the corporate culture – This is one of the most important benefits of a 5S.

Getting Started

Tips For The Lean Facilitator

- Take photos before the lean event. Examples include:
 - workbenches;
 - inside cabinets; and
 - the general area.
- Gather supplies for the event, such as:
 - paint (make old equipment look new again);
 - yellow vinyl tape (for marking floors); and
 - other necessary items specific for your event.
- Train the participants for the event.
 - Explain each step of the 5S process.

The Point-Of-Use Concept

- The point-of-use concept is nothing more than having items such as tools, materials, or supplies at the point (location) where they are being used.
- This reduces or eliminates the time wasted walking around.
- At home, this concept is applied in the kitchen.
- Notice that items such as:
 - plates;
 - silverware;
 - pots and pans;
 - refrigerator, etc.are all located in their point-of-use, the kitchen.

Shadow Boards

- Shadow boards are an effective visual control for organizing tools or other items used in the process.
- Establish a “point-of-use” for tools and equipment.
- Shadow boards are normally attached to a workstation. However, they can also be attached to mobile carts and used for flexible workstations.
- Usually, a simple pegboard purchased from your local hardware store is an inexpensive and effective method of creating a shadow board.
- Getting Creative – Using pegboard material is just one example. You can create shadow boards inside drawers using foam or even fabricate a shadow board out of wood or metal. Whatever works best!

Shadow Board Example # 1



Standard Workbenches

- Shadow boards are mounted directly to each workbench.
- Each bench is identical or standardized.
- Tools are hung on the shadow board at their “point-of-use.”
- The shadow boards also act as a visual control alerting employees to missing tools.

5S Results - Hardware Project

Before And After Photos



Visual Controls - All of the bins are labeled and arranged in a logical order.

Tips For Getting Started

Beginning Your Lean Transition

Take Small Steps

- Taking several smaller steps is a safer and more effective method of beginning your lean transition.
- Make a change, let the “dust settle,” then go back and make some more changes.
- Your project does not need to be perfect the first time you implement change, just better.
- You can always revisit the project at a later time.
- Remember lean manufacturing is about continuous improvement.