

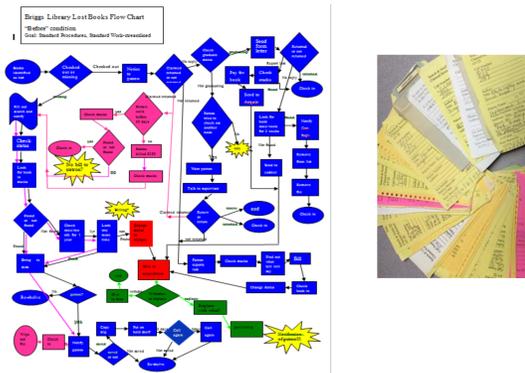
Look for Problems and Find Opportunities: Lean in Your Library

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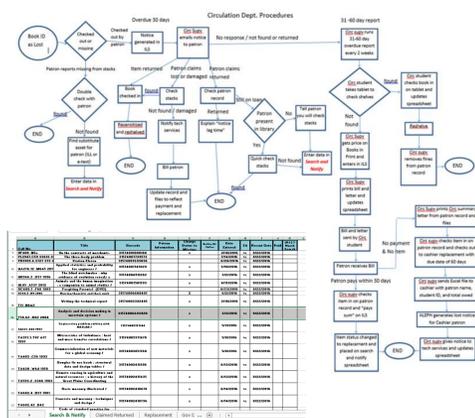
Lost Books Project

- ❖ **Problems:** Lost items remained in “lost” status too long. Disappointed patrons had to wait for needed items that were “Lost” or “Not on Shelf” (NOS). Time-consuming staff procedures included non-value added steps and paper shuffling.
- ❖ **Goal:** Have more efficient lost book process and Search & Notify procedures leading to a more accurate, useful catalog and more timely delivery of materials.
- ❖ **Changes in practice:** Interlibrary loan made available for lost, missing and overdue items. Search & Notify requests and NOS items entered immediately into Excel to eliminate paper, filing, etc. Use of computer tablet and spreadsheet on a shared drive streamlined many steps and has eliminated duplication of work. Items are replaced or removed from catalog within 3-4 months instead of 6 months (or more).
- ❖ **Results:** Eliminated years-long backlog of lost items in the catalog. Systematic approach improves communication among staff. Long-overdue items are recovered more quickly. Lost items are billed more quickly. Fewer non-value added activities result in less faculty and staff effort and saved resources.

Lost book process: BEFORE
Bursts represent dead ends or unknowns



Lost book process: AFTER



Timeline: January 2013 - August 2013

Abstract

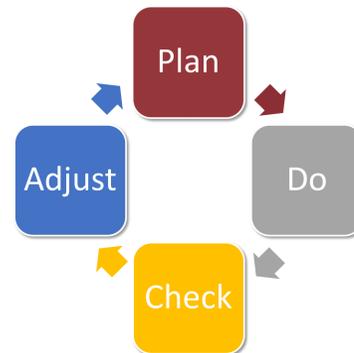
Lean organizations actively seek out waste (time, energy and resources) and inefficiencies in order to maximize value for customers. Every problem acknowledged is an opportunity to improve something for your patrons. Several years ago, South Dakota State University began implementing Lean across campus. Staff at Briggs Library are using Lean principles to improve library processes, both large and small. As part of the library's strategic plan, every department is responsible for at least two Lean projects per year. The examples presented here illustrate the value of Lean for customers as well as the benefits to the organization.

Introducing Lean

Lean is: **A set of tools** **A methodology** **A culture** **A journey**

Lean:

- ❖ Focuses the work of the organization on what is valued by the patron (or customer, patient, stakeholder)
- ❖ Engages participants in an in-depth critical analysis of processes and procedures
- ❖ Systematically improves the flow of work and eliminates “wastes”



Lean Principles:

- ❖ Focus on customer's view of value
- ❖ Every step adds value, reduces waste
- ❖ Processes flow efficiently for customers and those doing the work
- ❖ Just-in-time processes/practices
- ❖ Continual review

A Lean Review:

- ❖ Involves those doing the work and outside eyes
- ❖ Can be messy
- ❖ Requires careful scoping of the problem
- ❖ Reveals complexity, even in simple processes
- ❖ Begins with initial training for all library staff

Lean in Practice



Common Types of Waste in Libraries:

- ❖ **Defects or Poor Quality**
 - Equipment not performing well
 - Catalog not accurately showing what we own
- ❖ **Waiting**
 - Patron waits for needed materials
 - Staff waiting to resolve bottlenecks
- ❖ **Motion**
 - Excess filing, moving paper from place to place
 - Moving people or items more than necessary
- ❖ **Overprocessing**
 - Unnecessary paper or forms
 - Redundant steps
 - Inefficient processes

Benefits:

- ❖ Sets up clear standards to assess progress
- ❖ Documents procedures in detail, including systematic updates
- ❖ Eliminates “work-arounds” by solving problems at the source
- ❖ Changes the work culture
 - Reduces barriers between staff and librarians
 - Encourages staff to think differently about the work they do
 - Empowers staff at all levels to address problems

Laptop Circulation Project

- ❖ **Problems:** Laptops often returned late. Frequent turn-aways because laptops were not available. Laptops often not working well. Tag-team checkouts by pairs of patrons limited the availability to broader group of users.
- ❖ **Goal:** Provide short-term access to well-functioning laptops to as many people as possible.
- ❖ **Changes in Practice:** Staff run through maintenance checklist when laptop is returned and send for repairs as needed. A new tracking system ensures that laptops are also updated monthly.
- ❖ **Change in Policy:** Dramatically increased the fine for overdue laptops.
- ❖ **Results:** Laptops function much better overall and are returned on time making them available to more patrons. Laptop turn-aways are tracked to help assess the service.

Laptop checkout form: BEFORE

Laptop checkout form: AFTER

Timeline: August 2015 - January 2016

References and Resources

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A culture of having no problems is a problem!