

Lean Workshop 2 – Direct Observation & Current State Mapping

Lesson Summary:

Direct Observation is a tool that helps us listen with our eyes to understand the current reality of the process we are looking to improve. The three main ways to do observation are as follows:

- *Observation Real-Time* – watching as it happens. This will provide you with the most accurate information. This may be hard to do if the process doesn't happen frequently or if there are other barriers, such as patient confidentiality, to doing this live.
- *Simulation* – role play or use data of a recent time the process was done to simulate how the process happened. As an example, have a co-worker simulate filling out patient paperwork with fake information and asking questions that frequently come up when patients normally fill out the paperwork. This will still allow you to understand how long things take and you will get a good idea of what happened during the process, but it won't be as accurate as doing a live observation.
- *Perception* – listing out tasks from memory. This gives you the least accurate information as we tend to forget a lot of the small tasks that happen without simulating and showing what was done.

Current State Mapping is used to visually represent what we have observed. This allows us to understand the flow of how things are being done, see the connection of who is doing the work, and the details of the activities that are happening throughout the flow.

Tips for Homework 2 (Perform 2 observations and Create a Current State Map):

Direct Observation:

When performing the observation make sure to inform the person you are observing of the following:

- Provide the start and end of the scope for what you would like to observe them doing
- Tell that this is not an audit or performance review, there is no wrong way to do the process.
- Explain that the information will be used to see if any improvements can be made
- Thank them for their time and willingness to let you observe. This process can be uncomfortable especially if they are unfamiliar with Lean and this is their first time being observed.

When playing the role of observer make sure to do the following:

- Use the direct observation template, which can be found in the Learning Hub, to help you capture what you are seeing and capture the time it takes.
- Take as many notes as possible on what you are seeing, if you are handwriting your hand should be sore by the end.

DIRECT OBSERVATION WORKSHEET			
PROCESS OBSERVED: <i>Pre Visit Planning</i>		OBSERVER: <i>Mindy</i>	
START POINT: <i>Prepare fare sheet</i>		OBSERVATION DATE: <i>7/25/22</i>	
END POINT: <i>uddle with Provider</i>		TOTAL CYCLE TIME: <i>15min</i>	
Step #	Step Description	Start Time	End Time
1	<i>Login to EPIC</i>	<i>7:30am</i>	<i>7:31</i>
2	<i>Navigate to Schedule Tab</i>	<i>7:31</i>	
3	<i>Filter to Dr Johnson</i>		
4	<i>Select today's date</i>		<i>7:32</i>
5	<i>Check staffing schedule</i>	<i>7:33</i>	
6	<i>See Dr Johnson is only working the am shift</i>		
7	<i>message supervisor to see what provider to cover in the afternoon</i>		

- Make sure not to infer things but write exactly what you see. As an example: selects the file that was listed as Next Steps vs had a hard time finding the Next Steps file. The latter is the inferred one.
- STAY OUT OF SOLUTION SPACE! - It is so easy to start solving problems that you are observing especially if you also do the process. This takes away from your ability to observe what is happening. If you have an idea that comes up just put a note on the side of your observation template so you can save it for later and re-focus back on the observation.
- Try not to interrupt the observation unless you see unsafe behavior happening. Hold all questions to the end so you can capture accurate timing and not interrupt the person's flow. After the observation try not to ask questions about "why" they did something a certain way as we will get to this later. If you want to ask about what they would do if there was a decision point and what they would do if it went a different way than what you just observed then this would be an excellent question to ask.

Current State Mapping

Utilize the Excel Template from the Learning Hub or if you are working in person, you can grab colored post-it's that match the colors used in the template (this is part of the Lean Process standard work so please don't use other colors or we will have variation and not know what your colors mean). You can affix these to flip chart paper to keep your map together. Below is a key for the colors of post-it notes and what each one represents.

Flows	What are the high-level steps in the process?
Connections	Who is doing the work?
Activities	What tasks happen during this part of the flow?
Wait	Anytime you have a wait time

To create the current state map Tops Down Process Flow mapping is used. This means the process flows from left to right and top to bottom. If your process has a variation say one person did it one way and the other a different way put the post it's next to each other, this shows how a person could take either path. If you have a spot where one person did something and another did not you can simply write did not to represent this in the map. See example below.

