

Value stream mapping



What is it?

Value Stream Mapping (VSM) is a visual representation of all the steps (both value-added and non-value-added) needed to bring a product from supplier to customer.

What can it be used for?

Developing, quantifying and agreeing improvements to the activities along the value stream.

How to do it:

Step 1 – Commitment to Lean

Management assigns a value stream champion, assigns the core implementation team dedicated to a specified value stream, and clarifies the vision and goals for that team.

Step 2 – Choose the Value Stream

Target a product group, to eliminate waste and improve overall material and information flow.

Step 3 – Understand the Fundamental Lean Concepts

Before any team improvements can be made or planned, the team must acquire an appreciation of Lean.

Step 4 – Map the Current State

Draw a representation of the flow of material and information for a specified value stream. It allows the team to “drive the stake in the ground” in order that everyone has a common understanding and can respond to real data.

Step 5 – Investigate, Problem-solve and Remove Waste

Identify and investigate duplications, delays wasted time cost and other difficulties.

Step 6 – Map the Future State teams’ value stream.

Step 7 – Create Kaizen Plans

Using Future State Map create specific assignments and actions required for implementation.

Step 8 – Implement Kaizen Plans

Plan and implement the Kaizen activities.

Tips and guidelines

- Develop the VSM with input from a broad multi-functional group gathered around a large sheet of paper or whiteboard.
- Collect “live” documents, prints of computer transaction screens, etc. relating to a specific order before you start so that the “real” current process is mapped.
- Look for opportunities to introduce other tools into the demand chain, such as kanbans, in order to eliminate waste.