

Applying Lean and Reducing Waste Waiting

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This article is the first in a series of seven, with the aim of helping to answer the question:

“How do we deliver the most effective service for the very best cost to the taxpayer?”

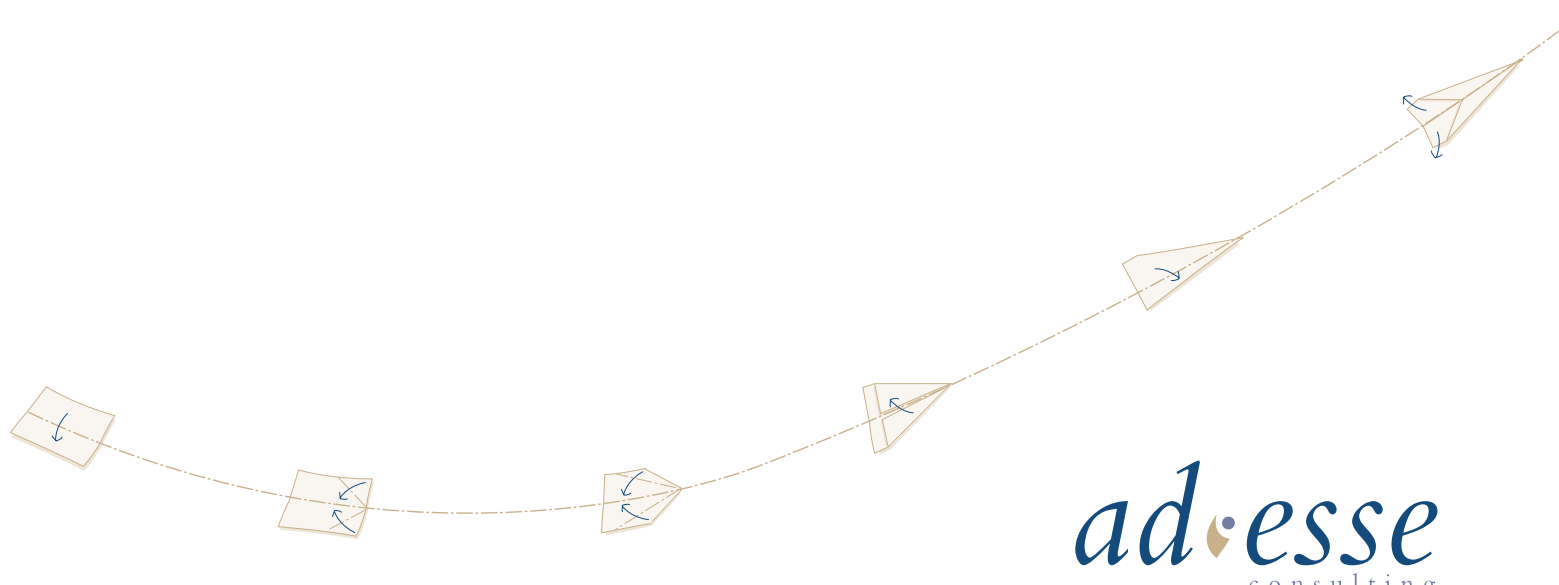
The full set of seven wastes are:

- Waiting
- Over-Production
- Rework
- Motion – people, materials and paperwork moving
- Excess Processing
- Inventory
- Transport

BACKGROUND

In this, our first article, we are looking at Waiting.

Waiting is something that we experience every day in our personal and working lives. The frustration felt by waiting for things that should happen sooner rather than later is something we can all understand and when you translate this into internal processes within a business you can understand the potential scale of the problem when delivering public services.



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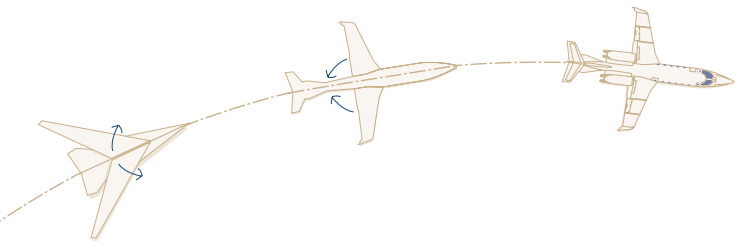
Once the wastes have been identified in this way, it is then easy to focus on specific areas for improvement. The value stream map is a powerful analytical tool.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

There are a number of Lean tools and techniques that can help to tackle the waste of Waiting, but like any Lean programme it is the correct implementation of these whilst tackling the cultural aspects of change management that will give the maximum long term benefit:

- A "Pull" process rather than "Push" to remove excess Work In Progress and therefore waiting time
- Work Balancing to improve the flow of a process, therefore reducing the lead time
- Information Centres – improved communications within and across teams. Visual measures to aid performance management and root cause problem solve reasons for problems causing waiting
- "Managed Buffers" – Agreed amounts of work in process to ensure if errors occur that the process doesn't come to a halt

If you would like to know more about the seven wastes and potential solutions to reduce waste and improve your customers experience then contact us directly or look on our website for our programme of free seminars. We're more than happy to find out about and discuss any issues you may have.



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