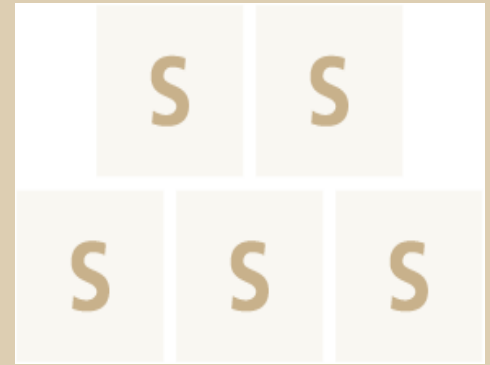


# Introducing 5S to Adult Social Care



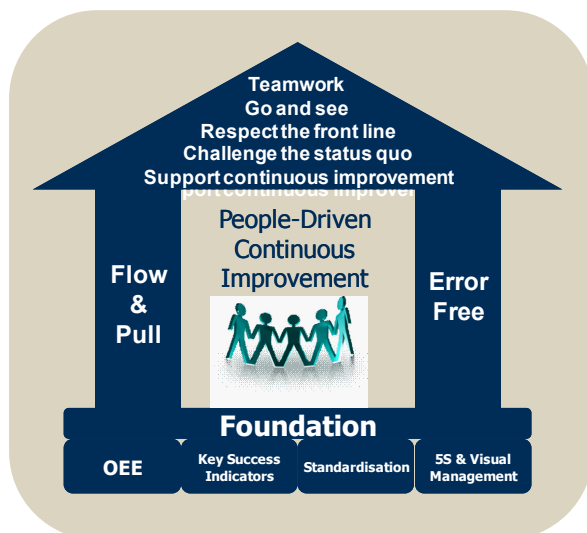
## From Possibility...

### BACKGROUND

Part of this transformation programme was to establish the Lean Foundation tools; this case study focuses on the 5 exercises that have been conducted across Adult Social Care.

5S is one of the foundation tools of Lean, it is used to create order and enable easy identification of any abnormalities within the working area. It is also used to highlight wastes and any abnormalities within the working area.

5S as seen here, is a foundation of the Lean 'temple'.



5S comprises a series of actions:

1. **Sort** the necessary from the unnecessary
2. **Set** the items in the most appropriate place considering, frequency and nature of usage and order of use
3. **Shine** – 'clean' the office environment, this not only creates a good working environment, it often highlights waste and potential problems
4. **Standardise** – develop standards, systems and procedures to maintain and monitor the first three S's
5. **Sustain** – develop checks and audits to sustain the new level, and continuously improve the standards

*ad•esse*  
consulting

## OUR APPROACH

We held a half day workshop with each team, this involved:

- Training on the theory of 5S and how it fits in the Lean 'temple'
- Examples of the application of 5S in other organisations
- Brainstorming office based wastes and frustrations – teams identified their 'top ten' worst and most irritating problems
- Devising solutions and standards for the above
- Implementing the Sort, Set and Shine and Standardise stages of the 5S tool back in the office.



The exercise was conducted across many teams who had very different functions within Adult Social Care, from an office-based service user contact centre, to a front-line social care team.

## *To Actuality...*

ISSUE	WASTE PRODUCED	SOLUTION
Equipment needed to do the job not on the hot desks, and not clear which desks are hot desks	Movement & Transportation: Staff spend at least 10 minutes a day fetching equipment needed to do their job	Re-define the hot desk standard to include all the essential equipment needed on a daily basis – clear desk labelling of desks if they are hot desks and a visual indicator of whether a desk is vacant or in use.
Leaflets not replaced or in correct place	Movement & Waiting: Much time spent trying to find leaflets needed	Central store for leaflets established and kanban for leaflets introduced (see picture)
Letters and envelopes stored in many different places	Waiting & Inventory: Great deal of space taken up storing duplicated leaflets and envelopes – leaflets and envelopes would frequently run out as no visibility of stock	Central stores established, and visual re-order points introduced (see pictures), required quantities agreed
Printed forms always running out	Waiting: Staff would have to wait whilst an administrator replenishes the stock of forms	Laminate a copy of the form and establish a kanban system. Change the process so all staff responsible for replenishing stock
Excessive time spent trying to find most recent documents in IT folders	Errors & re-work: Out of date or incorrect forms were often used	Conduct the 5S exercise on the shared IT folders; delete all old files, set up archive folders and desktop shortcuts. Introduce version numbering of forms and letters used
Office layout not obvious or clearly labelled	Movement: Visiting or new staff would spend a lot of time walking around trying to find printers, stationery etc	Short term solution: Create a colour coded floor plan of the office and put it on the Information Centre  Long term: Clearly label the workplace including hanging signs from the ceiling.

**A KANBAN FOR LEAFLETS WAS ESTABLISHED BY INSERTING A LAMINATE COPY OF EACH LEAFLET INTO THE STORE**



**A CENTRAL STORE WAS ESTABLISHED FOR ALL LETTERS, ENVELOPES AND LEAFLETS WITH VISUAL RE-ORDER POINTS**



**A TOTAL OF FOUR RUBBISH BINS WERE TAKEN AWAY TO BE RE-CYCLED**

**LOTS OF EQUIPMENT WAS RE-DISTRIBUTED ACROSS THE ORGANISATION**



**COLOUR CODED OFFICE MAP INCLUDED ON THE INFORMATION CENTRE**



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## BENEFITS

The generic benefits of systematically applying 5S are:

- Waste is easily identified for elimination
- There is an easy way of achieving major change in an office environment
- You have a structure for establishing an orderly, clean and organised working environment
- Pride and ownership is generated in the workplace creating a greater sense of team and individual accountability
- Creates more pleasant working environment and gives good impression to suppliers / customers that things are in control.

The specific benefits to the team were:

- Reduction in stationery ordering – saving time and cost
- Fewer interruptions for staff based permanently in the office
- Significant reduction in errors - no out of date letters or leaflets will be sent in erroneously
- Re-distribution of equipment saved other teams the cost of ordering new equipment
- A more pleasant working environment for hot desking staff.

### Quote from Wendy Shirvani, Social Care Direct Manager:

*"I found the 5S exercise to be an excellent team activity. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed being involved in the 'ceremonial' de-cluttering of the Social Care Direct office and in deciding where to relocate what was left. This resulted in two 'mountains' of out-of-date paperwork and unused equipment and provided a surprising amount of space to place close at hand and clearly labelled all the things needed for the team to work even more efficiently."*

## FURTHER INFORMATION

To receive regular case studies and articles like this one, you can subscribe to our newsletter 'Actualty'. Contact us at Ad Esse Consulting Ltd.

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