



## Robert W. Allen MBB, PMP

Several thousand projects were being managed by a project management IT system (database tool). This tool was opened, and data viewed and manipulated several times for any given project. Due to the number of projects and users, forms of waste associated with using the tool was multiplied significantly.

Complaints about the tool were ambiguous, such as 'cumbersome' and 'not intuitive'. Fundamentally, users were complaining about tool complexity and non-value-added steps required to navigate through it.

A Kaizen event was held whereby a current state map was created of the information flow and process by which data was entered into the project management tool. This was done by posting screenshots of all pages of the IT tool and showing navigation between pages and pop-ups using colored string. This 'made the process visible'.

Current state measures of the IT tool's complexity was documented as follows:

	Current State
Number of data elements entered by the user	675
Number of pop-ups	123
Number of navigational dropdowns	27
Number of data element dropdowns	180
Number of pages (total)	70
Number of pages (NVA)	16
Number of pages (VA)	54

The Kaizen team then accomplished the following:

- Brainstormed problems/issues/opportunities
- Documented ideas
- Established actions
- Prioritized 67 ideas/actions according to the criteria: Process Frequency x Value x Ease of Implementation

Actions revealed by the analysis were incorporated into the future state, with improvement in the tools complexity estimated as follows:

	Current State	Future State	% Improvement
Number of data elements entered by the user	675	527	22%
Number of pop-ups	123	74	40%
Number of navigational dropdowns	27	19	29%
Number of data element dropdowns	180	180	Out of scope
Number of pages (total)	70	54	22%
Number of pages (NVA)	16	0	100%
Number of pages (VA)	54	54	0%

**Note #1:** Pop-ups were considered a form of waste since, when a pop-up occurs it requires the user to perform a 'context shift'. This is the manufacturing equivalent of 'motion', or looking for a tool, except in this case it is occurring with the user physically looking elsewhere on the screen and absorbing what the new window is telling them.

**Note #2:** The Kaizen team left data element dropdowns unchanged to limit the project scope.

Overall the improved efficiency of this IT tool resulted in savings through reduction in time and number of transactions exercised by approximately 10,000 employees. Savings was not quantified, but likely exceeded several-hundred thousand dollars/year.