



Australian  
National  
University

# Removing waste from our work

Using Lean

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SIRT01

## What is Lean and how can we use it to remove waste from our administrative activities?

Lean is a user-centric methodology used to continuously improve processes via the elimination of wasteful activities. The methodology grew from continuous improvement management philosophy and manufacturing methods undertaken by Toyota and other manufacturers in the 1980s.

Lean enables staff to examine their own workplace to eliminate activities that do not add value i.e. wasteful activities. This approach can improve University experience and release time that frontline staff can reinvest in service provision.

The methodology has been adopted in the University sector as a way of involving people who provide service in the continuous improvement process, giving them a sense of ownership of the improved service.

### Types of Waste

There are eight types of waste, which can be remembered with the mnemonic **TIM WOODS**.

#### TRANSPORTATION

*Moving things*



#### INVENTORY

*Storing things*



#### MOTION

*Moving people*



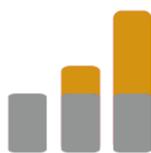
#### WAITING

*Delays*



#### OVERPRODUCTION

*Making too much*



#### OVERPROCESSING

*Too much complexity*



#### DEFECTS

*Mistakes*



#### SKILLS

*Misusing skills*



Below are some examples in the context of University administrative activity.



Source: Philippa McIntosh - [www.100pceffective.com](http://www.100pceffective.com)

## Identifying non-essential or wasteful administrative activity

There are four criteria that you can test an activity against, to see if it is an important part of the process, or unnecessary. They are:

- Removal of the activity will improve user experience and / or reduce administrative burden.
- The activity does not have a legislative, regulatory or other external compliance requirement.
- Information collected by the activity is not required for any formal reporting or decision making.
- Removal will not affect another activity, process or system.

If the activity meets the above criteria, you can consider removing it from the process.

## What to do when you have found a wasteful activity

- Identify** Work with key stakeholders and users to identify, assess and prioritise opportunities for the reduction / removal of administrative activity.
- Simplify** Through appropriate consultation, take the administrative activity to its simplest form, removing non-essential activity or parts of a process that are not required. Develop the proposal, driving support and gaining approval.

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**Rectify** Remove the activity and assist the Business area in communicating the change to stakeholders and users

## Principles to remember when using Lean

- Continuous Improvement
  - Always look for new ways to do things
  - Challenge your thinking
- Respect for People
  - Involve staff at all levels in decision making, not just managers
  - Frontline staff often know what works well and what needs improvement
  - Ask for and value the views of others

## Additional Resources

There are additional resources available as a guide from other sectors;

- <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20200501112144/https://improvement.nhs.uk/documents/2125/lean-ohnos-eight-wastes.pdf>
- <https://www.biz-pi.com/product/tim-wood-lean-wastes-slides/>
- <https://www.100pceffective.com/blog/the-8-wastes-in-higher-education-infographic/>

For further assistance or advice, or for help with process automation / process redesign opportunities in your area, please contact [Planning & Service Performance](#)