




GEMBA WALKS

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WHAT IS A GEMBA WALK?

The Gemba walk is an essential part of the Lean management philosophy.

- Its purpose is to allow managers and leaders to observe the actual work process, engage with employees, gain knowledge about the work process and explore opportunities for continuous improvement.
- A Gemba Walk is also an opportunity for managers and leaders to coach and receive coaching.

GEMBA WALKS

ARE NOT DONE ALONE

Gemba walks are meant to be coaching opportunities.

Step 1: Use your LSW to establish a day/time and stick to your schedule. Make it routine!

Traditional Management Style: "Do It My Way"



Lean Leadership Style: "Follow Me, and We'll Figure This Out Together"



DEFINE

THE PURPOSE






Define 'purpose' for walk – why doing it?

Define scope for walk – where headed?

Coach appropriate behaviors to participants:

- o One conversation at a time.
- o Show respect. Listen more than you talk.
- o Make no on the spot judgements, seek to understand.

TYPES OF GEMBA WALKS

-  Safety
-  5S
-  Waste – Waste Walk
-  Process Focus – Never Focus on Individuals
-  Walk the Value Stream of a Product





WHAT TO DO

ON A GEMBA WALK

- If with another leader, ask to SEE their leader standard work
- Review Hr x Hr and Tier Boards
- Review corrective actions / plans for top issues
- Discuss team board problem solving process
- Review training matrix and ensure plans are in place
- Pay attention to lean waste and review plans

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Simple 3 Question Summary:

1. What is Working?
2. What Is NOT Working?
3. Given That, What Will You Do Differently Going Forward?

GEMBA CHECKLIST

- ✓ What are you currently working on?
- ✓ Is there an established process for this type of work?
- ✓ Do you have any problems with the established processes?
- ✓ Why is there a problem? How can you fix the problem?
- ✓ What do you do to recognize root cause of the problem?
- ✓ Who do you speak with if there's a certain problem?



TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 1: Create a Theme

Before a walk begins, managers should pick a theme to guide the entire Gemba walk. This narrows the focus of the Gemba walk and yields better results, as attention is not spread amongst different themes and objectives. Once a theme has been chosen it's easier to tailor your Gemba walk questions to the theme you chose, and ask quality questions.

TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 2: Prepare the Team

Inform the team by explaining what a Gemba walk is and what to expect from a routine Gemba walk. Share this in your Tier Meetings. Consider sharing your checklist, too.

This lowers a team's anxiety as the Gemba walk will not be perceived as an evaluation, but rather, a collaboration between participants. Getting buy-in from the team beforehand will also raise questions that could have been missed.

TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 3: Focus on the Process

Stick to the evaluation of the process and how things are done. Here, a checklist can help. By writing questions that force you to assess the process, not the person, you can avoid the most common Gemba walk mistakes: **blaming**.

Remember: **You are there to identify opportunities of improvement in the process and barriers on the shop floor hindering productivity.**

TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 4: Keep the Value Stream Front & Center

Make sure your checklist traces the whole value stream. By sketching these questions out beforehand, you can ensure you don't miss any crucial stations or processes.

Focusing the bulk of your Gemba walk on the value chain is more effective in identifying bottlenecks and potential pockets of waste. Removing such bottlenecks will improve overall performance across the value chain.

TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 5: Record Your Observations

Record everything. Hoover up every data point you encounter on your Gemba walk. Don't make assumptions or recommendations before journaling everything you find on the Gemba walk. Here, checklists are helpful. You can record your observations as answers to the questions you know you need answered. You can also just take notes or record and document your findings via video.

Regardless of method: **record, record, record!**

TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 6: Get a Second Vantage Point

Once the Gemba walk has concluded and all relevant information has been recorded, seek a second opinion. Better yet, have another team member write their own checklist. **Having a fresh set of eyes review your findings could yield important insights.**

Comparing checklists can help you locate any gaps in your own thinking. This second perspective could be someone far removed from the operations or an experienced operator who did not take part in the Gemba walk. Feedback reveals overlooked information.

TIPS & POINTS

TO REMEMBER

Step 7: Solicit Feedback

Present your findings to the team regardless of outcome. Whether your findings were insignificant and no changes need to be made to the operations or vice versa. This brings the collaboration between stakeholders full circle and negates any feelings of being watched by the team during the Gemba walk.

If changes need to be made, include them in your presentation tying back to your findings. This brings buy-in from all stakeholders and increases probability of success once the change to operations occurs.



Conclusion



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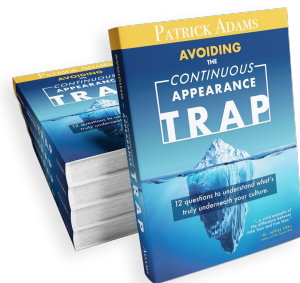
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