

Waste of Waiting Notes

The Seven Types of Waste

Waste Type	Description
Defects	Errors, mistakes, or problems with a product or service
Waiting	People waiting for something to happen
Excessive Walking	Walking or other human movements that are not needed to serve the customer
Excessive Processing	Performing more work than is needed to serve the customer
Excessive Production	Making or ordering more material goods than are needed to serve the customer
Excessive Inventory	Storing or holding more material goods than are needed to serve the customer
Excessive Transportation	Shipping or moving material goods farther than is needed to serve the customer

1) What is the waste of waiting?

The waste of waiting occurs when a person has to wait for something to happen

Examples of waiting waste:

Customer waiting in line for fast food service

Driver waiting in their car to find a parking space

Team leader waiting for budget approval to buy a new copy machine

Waiting for shipments to arrive from a supplier

Insurance agent waiting for information from their customer

2) Who cares about waiting waste ... why is that important?

We care because waiting can ...

Aggravate customers and employees

Reduce revenue (due to lost business from external customers)

Increase cost (due to reduced productivity of internal customers)

As with defects, this leads to UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS and an ANNOYING and UNPRODUCTIVE work environment

3) How to find waiting waste?

You can find waiting waste by OBSERVING and actively looking for the SIGNALS:

a) PEOPLE IN LINE: In a waiting line, on the phone, on the internet, in a car, etc.

b) THINGS SEEM TO BE STALLED: You ask yourself: "Why is this taking so long?"

Example of people in line: People physically waiting in a fast food line

Example of things that seem to be stalled: Team leader waiting for budget approval

4) How to eliminate waiting waste?

Ask WHY this waiting is happening

Bottleneck where one individual or machine is overloaded

Communication problem where "hand-off" is delayed

Unexpected surge in demand

Then, address the answer to the why question

Do two tasks in parallel rather than waiting for one to finish before starting the other

Streamline or eliminate certain steps in the process

Signals of Waste

Waste Type	Signals to Look For
Defects: Errors, mistakes, or problems with a product or service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rework, needing to do something over again • A customer who did not get what was promised
Waiting: People waiting for something to happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People waiting in some form of line • Things seem to be stalled
Excessive Walking: Walking or other human movements that are not needed to serve the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People walking around a lot, especially back and forth • People suffering from movement-related ailments such as sore backs, joints, or hands
Excessive Processing: Performing more work than is needed to serve the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of activity or people involved in the work • Work products that are not used and are discarded
Excessive Production: Making or ordering more material goods than are needed to serve the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace of ordering exceeds pace of consumption • Materials received which are not needed
Excessive Inventory: Storing or holding more material goods than are needed to serve the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of old inventory such as dust on storage boxes • Stock items which are being discarded
Excessive Transportation: Shipping or moving material goods farther than is needed to serve the customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of goods being held on carts and in vehicles • Long in-transit times