

Gemba Walks Notes

1) What are gemba walks?

A gemba walk is a regular visit by a manager to the “gemba” to interact with the workers.

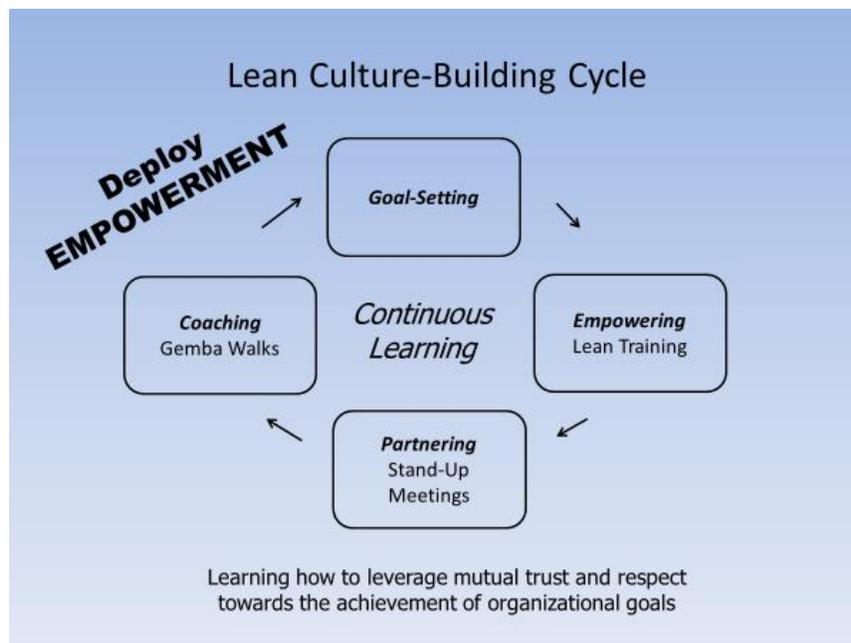
The “gemba” is the place a work. For example, a warehouse floor or a sales counter.

A gemba walk involves taking particular actions (*logistics*) and having a particular *style*.

Managers take the role of mentor and teacher, asking questions rather than directing

2) How do gemba walks contribute to the Lean management system?

The Gemba Walk is the primary practice for carrying out the coaching activity in the culture-building cycle.



The gemba walk is itself a show or respect which builds the culture of mutual trust and respect.

The walk also provides an opportunity for eliciting worker suggestions and making improvements.

The relationship between direct supervisor and employee is most important in the engagement and motivation of workers.

3) How to organize and implement gemba walks?

Logistics:

Minimum two walks per day, 30 minutes per walk

For remote workers, use video chat service like Skype

Making the time for the walk can be difficult at first, but it will get much easier as time goes on
Remember Ground Rule #2: Take the Time to Teach and Learn

During the walk, stand still and observe

Talk with workers about their work and ask questions

Having something to teach workers about: a new visual control, followup to waste training, etc.

When talking about waste, don't forget Ground Rule#1: Blame the System, Not the Person

Include customers in the walk if possible

Style:

Lean management style is guiding and facilitating rather than commanding and controlling

Do less "telling" and more "asking"
Remember Ground Rule #3: Don't Micromanage, Ask Questions

Telling workers was to do:

- 1) Takes away their opportunity and incentive to think on their own
- 2) Takes away a chance for them to improve their knowledge and capability
- 3) Takes away their responsibility and feeling of ownership
- 4) May not be the best way to do the job

Facilitate by removing obstacles to give workers the best possible opportunity to succeed

For chronic performance and attitude problems, be critical and tell them what to do, but always in private, never publicly blame and shame

Toyota Chairman's famous quote: "Go See, Ask Why, Show Respect."