

Wilson-Hurd is getting LEAN

LEAN—What does it mean?

September 30, 2005

Wilson-Hurd has begun the journey down the path of a Lean Enterprise culture. Lean is centered on continually eliminating waste or non-valued activities. In business, there are eight types of waste:

- The Waste of Scrap or Rework
- The Waste of Transportation (material handling)
- The Waste of Motion
- The Waste of Waiting
- The Waste of Inventory
- The Waste of Over Production
- The Waste of Over Processing
- The Waste of Under Utilized Resources



By utilizing Lean techniques, companies are also able to improve levels of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction can be defined as, “meeting a customer’s expectations for quality, delivery, price performance and service of our products.” Increased customer satisfaction will drive company performance by reducing costs and increasing orders.

Some of the Lean tools that will be used here at Wilson-Hurd include:

- Value-Stream Mapping: A “roadmap” of current process steps is redone to eliminate wasteful steps to create a “future-state” roadmap.
- 5-S: Workplace organization and housekeeping.
- Kaizen: Structured events aimed at rapid improvement of a specific process or cell.
- Self-Directed Work Teams: Empowering people to affect and direct change in the organization.
- Manufacturing Cells and Kanbans: Cells make use of a small group of machines and/or people to produce the product in their entirety. Kanbans are “visible” signals for inventory requirements or the need to produce a part.
- Set-up Reduction: Reducing the time it takes to set-up a machine to produce a part.
- Total Productive Maintenance (TPM): Maintain equipment to provide 100% on-demand availability.
- Error Proofing: Developing methods, tooling, or equipment that does not allow someone the opportunity to produce a part or process in error.
- Problem Solving: Utilizing employee’s skills and abilities to identify problems and create solutions.

One of the most important concepts of Lean is that it is a journey that never ends. Lean is not something that is implemented or a goal that is reached in six month, one year or three years. Lean is something that must become part of a company’s culture—the guide on how each employee conducts themselves day-in and day-out. Companies who are successful in their Lean journey will remain profitable and competitive for years to come.

We will keep you updated on progress that we make on our Lean Journey. Please feel free to contact Greg Pellot, Vice President of Sales, with any questions that you have.