

Lean Poster Series #1

Process Flow Risks

Process flow may be at risk for many reasons. It could be because we have fragile processes, because the act of making our processes Lean has, to some extent resulted in fragility. It may be because of layout of the process, it may be issues with suppliers or customers, it may be about quality issues, or it may be people issues, such as skill shortages.



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Fragile Processes

Lean may produce fragile processes, particularly in relation to size of single piece flow, because there are less buffers in the process to work with. There are many reasons why this may be the case, particularly in relation to quality problems.

- Lean may create fragile processes, particularly in relation to size of single piece flow, because there are less buffers in the process to work with.
- Single piece flow is less flexible than batch production.
- Processes are more sensitive to disruption.
- On-line need to be agile.
- Reduce changeover set-up.

The physical layout of the process is a major issue in relation to layout of the process, and many are not designed adequately.

- In relation to manufacturing processes, layout may be an issue, but it's even more true in transactional processes. And in these processes, layout is often based on keeping functional specialisms, such as Finance, HR, IT, etc. people working consecutively in the same area, rather than physically separated, so that physical distance is a long way between them.
- Quantify the layout.
- Service the layout.

- Map/understand the process routes (use Value Stream Map)
- Develop an initial layout
- Optimise the layout

