

What is waste?

Harold Philbrick (Vice president at Otis Technology 2008) describes waste as:

- * any activity that adds cost or time, but does not add value.
- * consuming more resources (time, money, space etc) that are necessary to produce the goods or services that the customer want
- * Pure waste - actions that could be stopped without effecting the customer or
- * Incidental waste - actions that need to be done based on how the current system operates, but do not add value

There are 8 wastes under the Lean Manufacturing methodology that can be identified, analysed and lowered or removed. The 8 wastes are: Transportation, Inventory, Motion, Waiting, Over-Processing, Over-Production, Defects and Skills.

These are blanket terms for what can be multi-faceted processes in the workplace. Some wastes can be attributed to more than one type, depending on the multiple or snowballing effect a process can have. However, categorizing forms of waste does assist in the identification of wastes that may be hidden or not always obvious.