



HR DELIVERY

Making Sure HR Delivers

HR DELIVERY WORKSHOP SERIES

Lean Process Improvement

Lean and Process Improvement: Improve One Flow of Work

Investigate delays, rework and unnecessary handovers in a service process. Map the current flow, test causes and design a small improvement experiment with measures that balance speed, quality and workload.



01 DAY

Introductory taster

IN-HOUSE

Your people. Your context.

PRACTICAL

Explore, discuss and apply

A PRACTICAL STARTING POINT

Understand the topic. Try it in practice.

A process may look efficient within each department while customers wait between them. Repeated checking, incomplete requests and unclear handovers can consume effort without improving the result. This workshop helps participants see one end-to-end flow, ask why friction occurs and design a modest test with the people doing the work.

The purpose is to introduce practical process inquiry and improvement through a service simulation. Participants map the current state, examine delay and rework, test plausible causes and plan a small experiment that preserves necessary controls while making useful work easier.

WHO IS IT FOR?

HR operations colleagues, service managers, team leaders, process owners and improvement participants who want to examine a recurring administrative or service workflow with those delivering it.

BY THE END OF THE DAY, PARTICIPANTS CAN:

- 01 Describe customer value**
State the outcome a process user needs and distinguish that outcome from internal activity counts or departmental convenience.
- 02 Map the current flow**
Draw a simple process map showing steps, handovers, decisions and waiting points using evidence from the work itself.
- 03 Identify avoidable friction**
Recognise rework, delays and unnecessary movement in a service example while checking the purpose of existing controls.
- 04 Test a likely cause**
Use structured questioning to separate a visible process symptom from plausible causes and identify evidence needed to test them.
- 05 Design a small experiment**
Specify a bounded improvement test with an owner, expected effect, balancing measure and conditions for changing or stopping it.
- 06 Review and standardise**
Explain how test findings could inform a revised working method, staff guidance and an ongoing review of process performance.

A useful first application

A practical introduction using a low-risk service example. The day does not certify Lean expertise, redesign a complete operating model or authorise removal of safety, regulatory or assurance controls.

THE FRAMEWORK / WORKSHOP FOCUS

Process Improvement: workshop working model

The workshop uses six connected questions to examine value, observe flow, locate friction, test causes, trial a response and review learning. It is an introductory learning aid for a bounded service improvement.

A PRACTICAL LEARNING AID FOR THIS TASTER

01 Value

What useful outcome does the person receiving this service need?

02 Flow

How does work actually move from request to completed outcome?

03 Friction

Where do delays, errors or repeated effort interrupt that flow?

04 Causes

What evidence would distinguish the likely causes of this problem?

05 Experiment

What small, reversible change can we test with process owners?

06 Review

What results and unintended effects should guide the next decision?

Lean ideas are introduced through observation and experimentation, with respect for the people doing the work. The six questions support the exercise and do not constitute a complete Lean methodology or qualification.

LEARN BY DOING

Explore. Challenge. Make the ideas useful.

Short explanations lead into lively exercises, paired discussion and small-group challenges. Participants test ideas, share experience and build a draft together. The tone is engaging and enjoyable, with time to reflect and connect learning to real work.

01 The request relay

Teams process paper service requests under deliberately awkward rules, recording elapsed time and returned work. They repeat the simulation after proposing one change and compare the observed effects.

02 Walk the actual flow

Groups assemble the case process from different departments' accounts. They mark waiting, rework and decision points, then identify where direct observation could correct their initial map.

03 Challenge the first explanation

Participants receive a tempting explanation for repeated errors. They build a cause tree, request additional evidence and revise their hypothesis when the new information contradicts it.

04 Design an improvement test

Pairs propose a small process change and exchange test cards. Reviewers challenge the prediction, customer measure, balancing check and stopping conditions before the experiment is presented.

DIAGNOSE BEFORE YOU ACT

Evidence > shared feedback > agreed priorities

Use selected diagnostic prompts to distinguish known facts from assumptions. Discuss the findings and agree their meaning before proposing a solution. Feedback is part of diagnosis, not an afterthought.

ONE CASE, DEVELOPED THROUGH THE DAY

An employee support service completes straightforward requests slowly despite each team meeting its own task target. Requests move between HR, payroll and a shared inbox; missing details trigger repeated returns. Managers propose faster individual targets, but nobody has measured waiting time or followed one request through the full process.

Groups map the request journey, distinguish required checks from avoidable friction and propose a limited test with customer, quality and workload measures to review together.

THE FACILITATOR WILL

- Invite different perspectives.
- Make assumptions visible.
- Welcome constructive debate.
- Capture practical learning.



SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDA

A working day, with room to think.

09:00-16:30 | Six hours of facilitated learning, plus lunch and breaks. The agenda, emphasis and timings are always agreed with the client, including local scheduling needs.

09:00-09:20	Welcome and the request relay Experience a service process as customers and handlers, recording delays and errors before suggesting reasons for the observed performance.
09:20-10:15	Define value and process boundaries Agree the customer outcome, process start and finish, important requirements and evidence needed to examine the selected flow.
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Map work as it happens Build a current-state map with handovers, waiting points and returns, checking differences between the documented process and actual practice.
11:30-12:30	Investigate friction and likely causes Examine the case evidence, test initial explanations and decide which cause warrants a small investigation before selecting a response.
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:30	Design the first improvement test Specify a reversible change, expected effect, owner and resources while checking how necessary quality and assurance controls will operate.
14:30-14:45	Break
14:45-15:30	Measure more than speed Choose a small set of customer, quality and workload measures and establish how a comparison will inform the next decision.
15:30-16:10	Repeat, review and refine Run the improved simulation, compare results with the prediction and refine the proposed test using evidence and peer challenge.
16:10-16:30	Prepare a workplace experiment Choose one process conversation, agree who must participate and record the permission, baseline and review needed before a live trial.

Start with customer value, observe the whole flow and let a small test inform the next change.

FROM THE SESSION TO YOUR DESK

Useful models. Practical working records.

The day combines reference materials with drafts developed in the exercises. Each has a clear use beyond the workshop; the work reflects the evidence and perspectives available in the room.

01 Current-state process map

A worked map of a service request showing boundaries, steps, handovers, decisions, waiting and rework, with uncertain sections highlighted for observation before improvement proposals are confirmed.

Use it to discuss the whole journey with process owners.

02 Value and friction prompts

A reference sheet connecting the customer's required outcome with questions about delays, repeated effort and control purpose, supported by examples from the service simulation.

Use it to examine friction without dismissing necessary assurance activity.

03 Cause inquiry record

A case-based record of symptoms, competing explanations and evidence requests that demonstrates how to investigate a process problem before selecting a preferred fix or assigning blame.

Use it to test why a recurring process problem happens.

04 Small experiment card

A draft test description with a prediction, change boundary, owner, observation period, balancing checks and stopping conditions that can be adapted with an authorised process owner.

Use it to plan a reversible change and learn from results.

05 Balanced measurement sheet

A simple record for tracking customer experience, quality, elapsed time and workload together, with prompts to note case mix and other changes during the test.

Use it to check whether faster work creates problems elsewhere.

06 Review and working-method prompts

A guide for comparing results with predictions, consulting process users and deciding whether to adapt, stop or document a successful change for ongoing review and ownership.

Use it to convert useful experiments into clear shared practice.

CONTINUE EXPLORING

Continue with the models, diagnostic manuals and development resources on the HR Delivery website. Workshop exercises provide a first application; a full organisational diagnostic or implementation assignment can be agreed separately.

[Open the framework >](#)

[Explore diagnostic resources >](#)



MAKE THE LEARNING COUNT

A better conversation. A practical next step.

Choose a recurring service request and map it with colleagues who handle its main stages. Confirm the most important friction point through observation, agree one small authorised test and review both its intended effect and unintended consequences.

YOUR FIRST 30 DAYS

01

Days 1-7

Observe a real request

Agree the process boundary and customer outcome with its owner. Follow a small number of requests, recording actual waiting, returns and handovers while protecting sensitive service information throughout.

02

Days 8-21

Run a bounded test

Check the likely cause with colleagues and obtain agreement for a small reversible change. Record a baseline, trial the change and collect quality and workload evidence alongside speed.

03

Days 22-30

Decide from the findings

Review the test with process users and handlers. Compare results with the prediction, explain limitations and decide whether to adapt, stop or document the change with a named owner.

Follow-through is participant-led. Additional facilitation, a full diagnostic or specialist support can be agreed separately.

AVAILABLE IN-HOUSE

Shaped around your organisation

The client identifies a low-risk service process and confirms any controls that must remain. Participants bring a sanitised request example, an existing process description if available and observations about waiting, rework or difficult handovers.

PLAN YOUR IN-HOUSE WORKSHOP

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Discuss your workshop



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