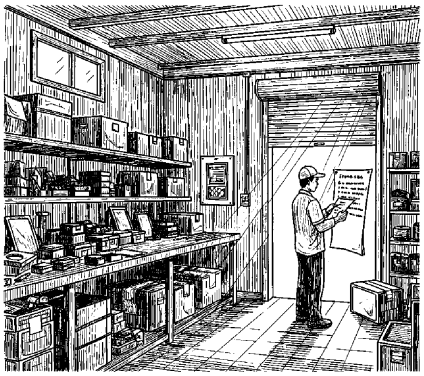
HIGH-VOLUME

WORKSHEET 1 OF 9

Daily 7-Waste Spot-Check

Five minutes per operational area. Run at the start or end of each shift.



Complementary worksheet for
Lean Operations Principles
by Ibrahim Anwar

SECTION 1

What This Is For

A five-minute daily scan that names waste the moment it appears, before it becomes "just how we do things here." The seven classic waste types — overproduction, waiting, transport, overprocessing, inventory, motion, defects — are already present in every operation. What is absent, in most SME settings, is the habit of naming them by category on the day they are observed rather than weeks later when the pattern is already entrenched.

This worksheet exists for the operator who does not have time for a formal audit but does have five minutes at shift start or end. One row per waste type. One column for whether it was visible today. One column for where and in what activity. One column for whether a fix is achievable today without approval or budget. Run it every day for two weeks and you have a pattern map no consultant could build faster.

SECTION 2

Benefits

What you get when you actually run this worksheet on a real situation:

- Catches waste the day it appears, not after it has run for months without a name.
- Builds a two-week pattern record that shows which waste types are structural (appear daily) versus situational (appear under specific conditions).
- Creates a daily trigger for frontline staff to see their work through a waste lens without requiring formal training.
- Generates a running list of quick fixes implemented, giving the operator a concrete record of daily improvement actions.
- Takes five minutes. The observation habit costs less time than the waste it catches.

SECTION 3

Framework To Use

— Seven-Waste Daily Scan

One row per waste type. Observe, name, locate, decide. The decision column is the action gate.

1	Step 1 — Walk one operational area at shift start or end (5 minutes, same route each day)
▼	
2	Step 2 — For each of the 7 waste types, ask: was this visible today in this area?
▼	
3	Step 3 — If Yes: record the specific location and activity where it appeared
▼	
4	Step 4 — Decision gate: can a fix be done today without budget or approval? If Yes, do it and record it
▼	
5	Step 5 — At week end: count which waste types appeared most often — those are the structural ones

SECTION 4

How To Use

Follow these steps in order. Each one builds on the previous.

1. Choose one operational area to scan. Use the same area every day for at least two weeks before rotating to a second area.
2. At shift start or end, walk through the area with this sheet. Spend no more than five minutes.
3. For each of the seven waste types, write Yes or No in column two. Do not skip rows even if the answer is No — the No entries are also data.
4. For every Yes row, write the specific location and activity in column three. 'Waiting — admin desk, delivery note queue' is useful. 'Waiting — general area' is not.
5. For every Yes row, decide whether a quick fix is possible today. If yes, write what it is. If no, write why not (approval needed / budget needed / cross-department decision).
6. At the end of each week, count how many times each waste type appeared across the seven daily sheets. The most frequent type is the first VSM candidate.
7. Any quick fix you marked Yes for: implement it before the next shift and record the result in next day's sheet.

SECTION 5

Example Use

A five-person packaging operation has been running the daily spot-check for eight days. The owner is reviewing two weeks of completed sheets to decide which waste type to address first.

Across eight completed sheets, waiting appeared as Yes on seven of the eight days. Motion appeared five times. Defects appeared twice. Overproduction appeared once.

The waiting entries all point to the same activity: packing staff idle between 09:30 and 10:15 every morning because the picking team has not yet delivered the day's orders to the packing station. The waiting column reads: "Packing station — goods not yet delivered from picking area. Est. 45 min idle per person."

The motion entries cluster around a different problem: the tape dispenser and label printer are at opposite ends of the packing table, requiring four extra steps per package. Observed on five of eight days. On day three, the owner moved the label printer. On day four's sheet, motion still appears — but the note reads "tape dispenser still far end, fix tomorrow." On day five it disappears from the motion row.

With eight days of data, the owner calculates: seven packing staff losing 45 minutes to morning waiting equals 315 minutes of paid time producing nothing, every day. At an average hourly cost of $2.80 per packer, that is $14.70 per day, $294 per month, $3,528 per year — from one documented waiting pattern. The fix does not require budget. It requires the picking team to shift their schedule by 30 minutes. That conversation now starts with a number, not a complaint.

SECTION 6

The Worksheet

Tear this out, copy it onto a fresh sheet, or fill it in directly.

Daily 7-Waste Spot-Check

Five minutes per operational area. Run at the start or end of each shift.

WASTE TYPE	OBSERVED TODAY? (YES / NO)	LOCATION / ACTIVITY	QUICK FIX POSSIBLE TODAY?

SECTION 6 (CONTINUED)

Reflection Prompts

After filling in the worksheet on the previous page, work through these.

1. Which waste type appeared most often this week? Write one specific activity that caused it.

2. Which fix from the 'quick fix' column did you actually implement? What changed?

SECTION 7

Tips and Traps

TIPS

- Walk the same route in the same order every day. Consistency in the observation path makes pattern detection reliable — you will notice what is different from yesterday because you are comparing against the same backdrop.
- Write the activity in the observer's words, not management terminology. 'Label printer out of tape, had to find replacement' is more useful than 'consumables issue.'
- If a quick fix is possible and takes less than ten minutes, do it during the observation walk. Do not schedule it. Scheduled small fixes rarely happen.
- Keep completed sheets for at least four weeks. The pattern across weeks is more informative than any single day's sheet.

TRAPS

- Marking No for a waste type because it was not as bad as yesterday. No means not observed, not 'better than usual.' Anything visible goes into Yes.
- Doing the observation from the doorway rather than walking through the area. Waiting waste and motion waste are invisible from five meters away.
- Treating the sheet as a reporting form rather than an action trigger. If the quick fix column stays blank every day, the sheet is decorative.
- Rotating areas before two weeks of data exist for the first area. Pattern detection requires at least ten consecutive observations in the same area.

SECTION 8

Appendixes

Appendix A — Quick-Fix Decision Rule

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Before acting on a quick fix, apply three tests:

Test 1 — Time: can this be done in under 30 minutes?
          If No -> log it as a kaizen card, schedule for next week.

Test 2 — Authority: does this require anyone else's approval?
          If No -> do it now.
          If Yes -> write who needs to approve and by when.

Test 3 — Reversibility: if the fix turns out to be wrong,
          can conditions return to today's state in under an hour?
          If No -> do not implement without a second opinion.

Quick-fix threshold: Yes to all three tests = implement during observation walk.
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Appendix B — Waste Type Reference Card

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Overproduction : Producing or buying before demand exists.
                 Signal: stock piling up, work queuing ahead of next stage.

Waiting        : Working hours spent idle waiting for something.
                 Signal: person at workstation with nothing to do.

Transport      : Goods or documents moving without changing condition.
                 Signal: same item handled at 3 or more locations.

Overprocessing : More steps or quality than the customer requested.
                 Signal: reports nobody reads, approvals nobody checks.

Inventory      : Capital locked in stock not immediately needed.
                 Signal: items sitting more than 7 days before use.

Motion         : People moving without directly working on output.
                 Signal: walking to fetch tools, documents, or materials.

Defects        : Output requiring rework before customer receives it.
                 Signal: anything done twice.
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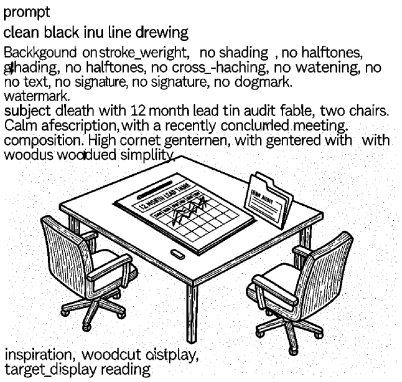

WHERE THIS WORKSHEET COMES FROM

Lean Operations Principles

Eliminate Waste Before Adding Capacity

by Ibrahim Anwar

This worksheet is one of nine in the *Lean Operations Principles* companion worksheet pack. The full pack is grouped into three categories: high-volume worksheets you can run weekly, niche-search worksheets for rare but high-value situations, and specific-case worksheets that walk you through a single concrete scenario.

Every framework, decision filter, and figure used in these worksheets is drawn from the chapters of the source book. The book sets the diagnosis, the worksheets give you the form to act on it.

Available on Google Play Books

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