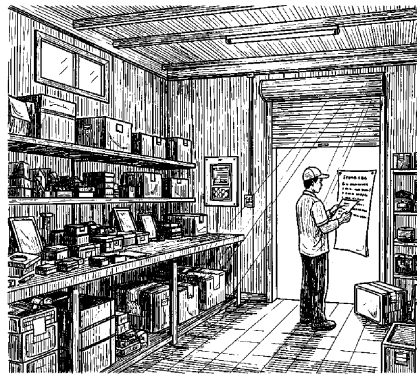


HIGH-VOLUME

WORKSHEET 3 OF 9

Kaizen Suggestion Log: Weekly Rolling Sheet

Ask two frontline employees the same question each week: 'What wastes the most of your time?' Log every answer, even if it cannot be acted on immediately.



Complementary worksheet for
Lean Operations Principles
by Ibrahim Anwar

What This Is For

A weekly log that converts the frontline's direct experience of waste into a structured record the operator can act on. The people doing the direct work know where the waste is. They experience it every day. They just have never been asked to say it, or if they were asked once, nobody recorded the answer or followed up. This sheet changes that by making the question a weekly ritual and the answer a written entry with a named outcome.

The log is not a suggestion box. It is a dialogue record. Each entry has two parts: what the employee said, verbatim, and what happened as a result. The second part is what most suggestion systems miss. Without it, employees stop volunteering input because they see it disappear into a form that goes nowhere. With it, the log becomes the evidence that employee input produces real changes — and that evidence is what sustains the rhythm month after month.

Benefits

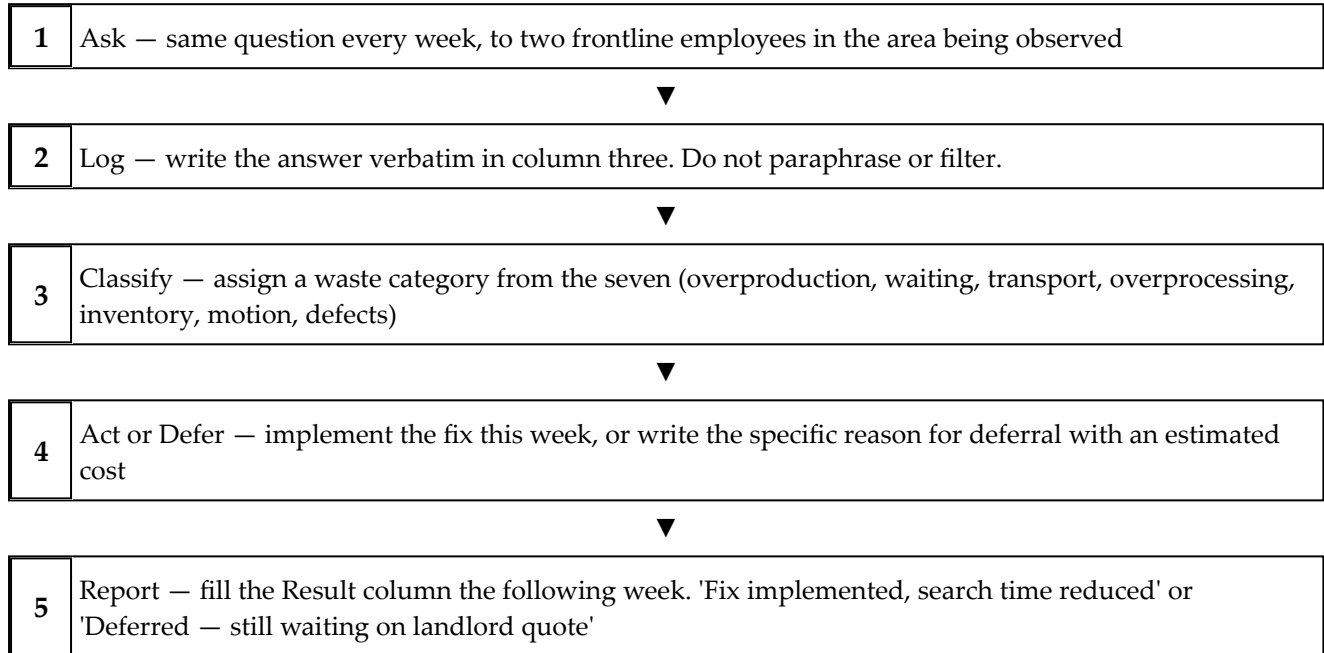
What you get when you actually run this worksheet on a real situation:

- Surfaces waste that observation alone misses, because employees experience problems from inside the process, not from an observer's position outside it.
- Builds a four-week rolling record of kaizen response rate — the ratio of suggestions implemented to suggestions logged — giving the operator a concrete measure of how well the improvement system is working.
- Creates accountability for deferred suggestions by requiring a written reason for each deferral, not a verbal dismissal.
- Demonstrates to employees that their input has value, which reduces resistance to lean activities and increases the quality of future input.
- Provides dated documentation of improvement actions that can be compiled into an investor-ready improvement track record.

Framework To Use

— Ask-Log-Act-Report Loop

One question, every week, to two employees. The loop closes when the result column is filled the following week.



How To Use

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

- 1 Each week, choose two frontline employees from the area under observation. Rotate through the team over time so all voices are captured.
- 2 Ask one question: 'What wastes the most of your time every day?' Write their answer verbatim in column three. Do not rephrase, do not guide the answer.
- 3 Assign a waste category from the seven classic types. If the answer does not fit neatly into one category, write the closest match and add a brief note.
- 4 Within two working days, decide: can this be fixed this week without approval or budget? If yes, write the action taken. If no, write the specific reason — not 'deferred' but 'deferred: requires landlord approval for shelf installation, estimated \$80.'
- 5 The following week, return to last week's entry. Fill in the Result column: what actually changed, or why the deferral is still standing.
- 6 Every four weeks, calculate the kaizen response rate: implemented suggestions divided by total suggestions logged. A rate below 50% means the log is producing input the system cannot act on — investigate the deferral reasons.
- 7 Review the longest-standing deferred suggestions. If a suggestion has been deferred for more than four weeks, estimate the monthly cost of the waste it describes and compare it against the cost of addressing it.

Example Use

A seven-person garment finishing operation has been running the kaizen log for three weeks. The owner reviews the four-week rolling sheet before the Monday morning walk.

Week 1, employee: Rini, finishing area. Answer verbatim: "I spend 20 minutes every morning looking for the right thread color because all the spools are in one bin mixed together." Category: Motion. Action: labeled dividers installed in the thread bin by Wednesday. Cost: \$4 in materials, 30 minutes to implement. Result (Week 2): "Thread found in under 2 minutes. Rini confirmed no more searching."

Week 2, employee: Budi, inspection station. Answer verbatim: "I have to walk to the back to get the rejection tags every time. They should be at the inspection table." Category: Motion. Action: deferred. Reason: no wall space at inspection table without moving the mirror. Estimated fix cost: \$15 shelf bracket. Week 3 result: "Deferred — still pending shelf installation."

Week 3, employee: Rini (rotated back). Answer verbatim: "The rejection pile from my area sits on the floor for two days before anyone takes it back to rework. It gets mixed with finished goods." Category: Defects. Action: implemented same day — a red bin placed at the finishing station with a pickup schedule posted. Result (Week 4): "No mixing incidents in past week."

Three-week response rate: 2 implemented out of 3 logged = 67%. The one deferred item (Budi's tags) has been outstanding 14 days. The owner estimates the inspection walk costs Budi 8 minutes per rejection — about 40 minutes per day. At \$2.50/hour, that is \$1.25/day, \$25/month. The \$15 shelf bracket pays back in 18 days. Scheduled for this Thursday.

Reflection Prompts

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

1. Count how many suggestions from the past four weeks have been implemented. Divide by total suggestions logged. That ratio is your kaizen response rate. Write it.
-

2. Which suggestion has been deferred the longest? Write the actual reason it has not been addressed. If the reason is budget, estimate the cost. If it is less than one month's rework cost in that area, revisit the deferral.
-

Tips and Traps

TIPS

- Write the employee's answer word for word, not a summary. The verbatim entry is more useful for root cause analysis and more honest as a record of what employees actually experience.
- Rotate which employees you ask. The same two employees every week produce a narrower picture than the full team's experience over a month.
- Implement small fixes the same week they are logged. A suggestion that gets implemented the same week it was given reinforces the habit faster than a suggestion implemented three weeks later.
- Share the Result column entries with the employee who made the original suggestion. Closing the loop verbally, not just on paper, is what makes the next week's question feel worth answering.

TRAPS

- Asking 'do you have any suggestions for improvement?' instead of 'what wastes the most of your time?' The first question invites vague answers. The second question invites specific, actionable ones.
- Leaving the Result column blank because you forgot to follow up. An empty Result column signals to employees that their input does not lead to anything.
- Treating all deferred suggestions as equally deferrable. A suggestion deferred because it costs \$8 and a suggestion deferred because it requires a structural renovation are not equivalent — rank deferred items by estimated monthly waste cost.

Appendixes

Appendix A — Four-Week Response Rate Calculator

At the end of each four-week cycle, complete the following:

Total suggestions logged (rows filled): _____
 Suggestions implemented within same week: _____
 Suggestions implemented within 4 weeks: _____
 Suggestions still deferred at 4-week mark: _____

Kaizen response rate = (implemented within 4 weeks) ÷ (total logged) × 100

Target: >= 60% within the first 3 months

>= 75% after 6 months of running the log

If response rate is below 50%:

Review all deferred items. Classify the deferral reason:

- Budget constraint -> estimate monthly waste cost vs fix cost
- Authority required -> identify who needs to approve and schedule
- Cross-department -> bring to next cross-department check
- Standard ambiguity -> clarify the standard before the fix

Appendix B — Escalation Criteria for Deferred Items

A suggestion deferred more than 4 weeks should be re-evaluated using the following criteria before it is deferred again:

Monthly waste cost estimate (minutes/day × hourly cost × 22 working days):

Rini's thread search: 20 min/day × \$2.50/hr × 22 days = \$18.33/month

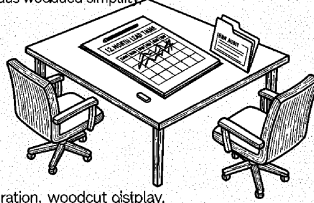
Fix cost: \$4

Decision: implement immediately, no further deferral justified

Decision rule:

- Fix cost < 1 month of waste cost -> implement this week
- Fix cost = 1-3 months of waste cost -> schedule within 30 days
- Fix cost > 3 months of waste cost -> document and review quarterly
- Fix requires cross-department change -> escalate to monthly lead time review

prompt
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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.

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