Lean Management System: Operating Model Assessment

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (1/8)

STANDARD WORK: Best practices used for team members and leaders for consistency, efficiency, problem identification, and continuous improvement.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
Standard work is not consistently defined or documented. Processes vary between team members and shifts. There's little awareness of standardization's importance. Employees rely on personal knowledge or preferences to complete tasks.	Basic standard work documents exist for some processes but are irregularly updated or followed. Implementation is sporadic. Some team leaders enforce standards, while others don't, resulting in inconsistent practices. Training on standard work is limited.	Standard work is documented for most processes and generally followed. Regular audits ensure compliance. Basic leader standard work is established for front-line supervisors, focusing on daily tasks and team management. Employees understand the importance of following standards.	Comprehensive standard work exists for all key processes. Teams actively participate in creating and improving standards. Leader standard work is well-defined for multiple management levels, including performance monitoring and improvement activities. Visual management reinforces adherence to standards.	Standard work is fully integrated into operations, driving continuous improvement. Leader standard work is mature, cascading through all leadership levels, ensuring consistent focus on strategic priorities and daily operational excellence. The organization views standard work as a competitive advantage, continually refining processes.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (2/8)

DAILY ENGAGEMENT: Team members collaborate in reflecting on the prior day, solving problems, planning for the day, and testing ideas to improve results.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
No structured daily meetings occur. Communication is sporadic and reactive. Team members work in isolation, with little awareness of overall goals or performance. There's no systematic way to share information or align activities across shifts or departments.	Inconsistent daily meetings lack structure and clear objectives. Limited problem-solving occurs. Participation is inconsistent, and the value of these meetings isn't widely recognized. Some teams have started implementing daily huddles, but the practice isn't standardized.	Regular daily meetings follow a basic agenda, including performance reflection and basic planning. Most team members attend and participate, though engagement levels vary. Teams use run charts to measure performance in meeting customers and stakeholders' requirements, and Pareto analysis to identify issues, but problem-solving may not be structured.	Well-structured daily meetings occur consistently, promoting active participation and efficient time use. Teams engage in structured problem-solving using run chart, Pareto analysis of causes, and validating the impact of their ideas to eliminate issues. Short-term planning is effective, linking daily activities to broader goals. Visual management tools facilitate meetings and track progress to improve processes and results.	Highly effective daily engagement sessions drive continuous improvement and are central to organizational culture. Teams consistently reflect, solve problems, plan, and test new ideas. The impact is visible in performance and morale. Information flows seamlessly between organizational levels.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (3/8)

PROBLEM-SOLVING: Practice methods such as 4C and A3 to clarify issues, identify root causes, and implement irreversible corrective actions.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
Problems are often ignored or addressed with quick fixes. No structured problem-solving method is used. Employees lack tools to address issues. There's no coaching for problem-solving; managers typically solve problems for their teams or ignore them.	Basic problem-solving techniques are occasionally used, but root cause analysis is limited. Application is inconsistent. Some managers attempt to coach problem-solving, but their approach is unstructured, and effectiveness varies widely.	Structured problem-solving methods (e.g., 4C, A3) are used for significant issues. Employees are trained in these methods. Leaders provide some coaching on problem-solving, following a basic framework. However, coaching quality and frequency are inconsistent across the organization.	Problem-solving methods are consistently applied organization-wide. Root causes are systematically identified, and corrective actions are usually effective. Leaders are trained in coaching problem-solving and regularly engage in it. Coaching sessions follow a structured approach, developing employees' critical thinking skills.	A robust problem-solving culture exists throughout the organization. Teams proactively identify issues and implement sustainable solutions. Problem-solving coaching is a core leadership skill. Leaders at all levels excel at developing others' problem-solving capabilities through expert coaching, fostering a learning organization.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (4/8)

TIERED MANAGEMENT: A daily accountability system that escalates performance gaps and requests for leadership support, ensuring a closed-loop resolution.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
No formal escalation process exists. Issues are handled ad-hoc, leading to delays and unresolved problems. There's no clear chain of command for problem resolution. Senior leaders may be unaware of significant operational issues. Accountability for problem resolution is unclear.	A basic escalation process exists but isn't consistently followed. Some performance gaps are identified, but resolution is often slow. There's an attempt to create a tiered structure for issue management, but roles at each level aren't clearly defined.	A tiered management system is in place and generally followed. Most significant issues are escalated and resolved, but the process can be slow. Clear guidelines exist for issue escalation at each level, with defined resolution timeframes. Regular management review meetings occur.	An effective tiered management system operates daily, with well-defined processes and clear ownership. Performance gaps and support requests are promptly addressed, with closed-loop resolution. Leaders skillfully use the system to drive performance. Visual management tools track issues and their resolution.	A highly responsive tiered management system ensures rapid issue escalation and resolution, driving organizational performance. It's integrated with other management processes, creating seamless information flow. There's a culture of transparency and shared responsibility for performance, with all levels collaborating to achieve goals.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (5/8)

VISUAL MANAGEMENT: Systems and processes are designed to empower quick problem identification, rapid learning, and continuous improvement.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
Little to no visual management exists. Information isn't readily available to team members, causing confusion about priorities and performance. Communication relies on verbal or written reports. Work areas lack visual cues for efficient operations. Employees have limited awareness of how their work impacts overall performance.	Basic visual displays exist but are often outdated or unused for decision-making. Implementation is inconsistent. Some teams create their own visual tools, but there's no standardized approach. Displayed information is often static and may not reflect real-time conditions. Training on visual management is limited.	Visual management systems exist for key processes and metrics. Information is generally up-to-date and used for daily management. Standard templates and guidelines for visual displays are mostly followed. Employees understand how to interpret visual information in their work areas. Regular updates are scheduled.	Comprehensive visual management systems are widely used, supporting problem identification, performance tracking, and improvement efforts. Real-time data is often incorporated, allowing rapid response to changes. Leaders regularly use visual tools in management processes. There's a focus on making information transparent and easily understandable.	Advanced visual management systems are fully integrated into operations, driving rapid problem identification and organizational learning. Visual tools are dynamic and interactive, often leveraging technology for real-time, customizable performance data views. All employees are skilled in using and interpreting visual information, actively contributing to its evolution.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (6/8)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: Individuals and teams continuously challenge every process and standard, forming hypotheses and learning from experiments.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
Little focus on continuous improvement exists. Processes remain static, with significant resistance to change. Problems are seen as inevitable rather than improvement opportunities. There's no systematic approach to gathering or implementing employee improvement ideas. Innovation is rare and usually reactive to crises.	Some improvement initiatives occur but are sporadic and often externally driven. Efforts are inconsistent and short-lived. Some teams implement improvement methodologies, but these aren't coordinated organization-wide. Employee suggestions are sometimes solicited but rarely systematically acted upon. Sustaining improvements is challenging.	A formal continuous improvement process exists and is generally understood. Teams regularly identify and implement improvements, but approaches may vary across areas. There are defined methods for submitting and evaluating ideas, with some resources allocated for implementation. Leaders generally support improvement efforts.	A strong continuous improvement culture is evident. More than one idea is implemented per person per month. Teams consistently challenge processes, experiment, and learn from results. A well-defined system manages improvement initiatives from idea to evaluation. Leaders actively champion improvement efforts. Employees are trained in improvement methodologies and empowered to drive change.	Continuous improvement is ingrained in the culture and seen as a key competitive advantage. More than two ideas are implemented per person per month. All individuals proactively seek improvement opportunities, forming hypotheses and driving innovation. Sophisticated systems prioritize and manage improvement initiatives aligned with strategic goals. Learning from improvements is robustly captured and shared organization-wide.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (7/8)

VALUE STREAM MANAGEMENT: Each level of the organization and every team has vertically and horizontally aligned goals and a plan to achieve them.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
Value streams are undefined and not understood. Focus is on individual processes rather than end-to-end flow, causing suboptimization and conflicts. There's little awareness of how work creates customer value. Departments operate in silos. Metrics focus on departmental efficiency rather than overall value delivery.	Basic value stream understanding exists, but management still focuses on individual departments. Initial efforts to map key value streams may be incomplete or outdated. Growing awareness of end-to-end process optimization exists, but cross-functional collaboration barriers remain. Attempts to reduce obvious waste are unsystematic.	Value streams are mapped for major products or services. Some cross-functional collaboration optimizes flow, but silos persist. Each major value stream has a designated owner responsible for overall performance. Regular value stream reviews focus on identifying and eliminating waste. Basic value stream metrics influence decision-making.	Value stream management is well-established and key to the operating model. Cross-functional teams regularly optimize end-to-end flow and reduce waste. Value stream maps are living documents, displayed and reviewed on the floor, and frequently updated. There's a strong focus on enhancing customer value throughout the stream. Advanced metrics drive decision-making at all levels.	Advanced value stream management is a core strategic capability. The entire organization aligns around optimizing value streams. Continuous experimentation enhances customer value and eliminates waste. Value stream thinking extends to suppliers and customers. Predictive analytics and real-time data proactively manage performance and identify improvements.

Lean Management System – Operating Model Assessment (8/8)

STRATEGY DEPLOYMENT: Each level of the organization and every team has vertically and horizontally aligned goals and a plan to achieve them.

Level 1 Initial	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Defined	Level 4 Advanced	Level 5 Leading
No clear organizational strategy exists, or it's not effectively communicated. Goals are unclear or misaligned. There's no structured process for cascading objectives. A3 thinking and catch-ball processes are not used. Strategy reviews, if any, are infrequent and lack structure.	A high-level strategy exists but isn't well-cascaded. Goals at different levels are often misaligned. Some managers use A3s for planning, but it's not standard practice. Catch-ball process is informal or inconsistent. Strategy reviews occur sporadically with limited reflection on progress or learnings.	Strategy is communicated and cascaded through most organizational levels. A3 thinking is used for strategy formulation and deployment at higher levels. Basic catch-ball process exists for goal-setting. Quarterly strategy deployment reviews include some reflection, but the process isn't fully standardized.	Clear strategy deployment process exists using A3 methodology. Robust catch-ball process ensures vertical and horizontal goal alignment. Most teams create A3s linked to organizational strategy. Monthly strategy deployment reviews include structured reflection processes, driving learning and adjustment of plans.	Comprehensive strategy deployment system uses A3 thinking at all levels. Sophisticated catch-ball process ensures perfect goal alignment and buy-in. Every team has clear A3s supporting organizational strategy. Weekly strategy deployment reviews feature in-depth reflection, driving continuous improvement and agile strategy adaptation.