

AMS IN FOCUS

THE ARIZONA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM NEWSLETTER

VOL.2 ISSUE 9

MAY 9, 2018

AMS Problem Solving 101 (Part 1)

WHAT



HOW



WHY



WHY



The Arizona Management System (AMS) is the catalyst transforming how Arizona government thinks and does business. AMS is an intentional, results-driven approach for doing the work of state government so that every employee reflects on performance, reduces waste, and commits to continuous improvement with sustainable progress.

We reduce waste by first seeing and defining problems that slow us down or otherwise interfere with our ability to get work done. Waste is defined as anything that doesn't add value from our customer's perspective. AMS is based on principles of Lean management, which teaches how to reduce waste in our business processes. Lean practitioners identify eight common forms of waste, which can be remembered using the acronym **DOWNTIME**:

Defects - Creating products that must be revised or changed.

Over Production - Making more products than the customer wants.

Waiting - Waiting for processing, products sitting in in-boxes, etc.

Not Using Talent - Failing to optimize the knowledge, skills and abilities of team members.

Transportation - Moving products to various storage locations, from process to process, etc.

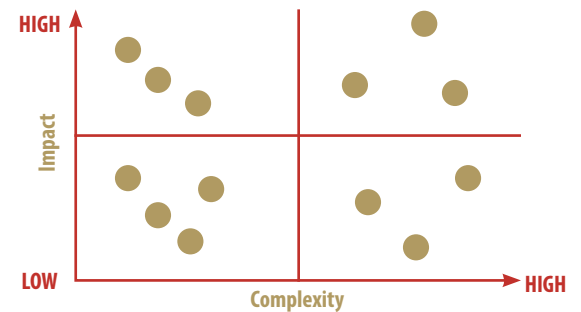
Inventory - Committing money and storage space to products not wanted by customer.

Motion - Moving products/people more than the needed to complete a process.

Excess Processing - Doing more "work" to a product than is required.

Teams often surface problems at their huddle boards, where they monitor performance metrics to see where underperformance

occurs. The huddle board is the place to collect and prioritize problems to be solved. Avoid attempting to solve problems here, as you will want to give adequate consideration to the scope and complexity of the problem. To do this, you may want to use an Impact/Complexity chart, like the one shown here:



The idea is to focus on solving less complex problems that can deliver the most impact (upper left quadrant of the chart,) though at times circumstances may warrant undertaking more complex problems that yield impactful, longer-term results.

As you prioritize, you may identify some problems that are so-called "Just Do Its," or JDIs. These are problems for which the root cause is typically understood with obvious countermeasures that can be implemented within about a week. Monitor progress toward resolving JDIs on the huddle board to ensure no issues arise that may warrant more complex problem solving.

Likewise, some problems may not be ripe for resolution at the time. Teams may already have a full slate of problem solving underway, and it is better to focus and finish before undertaking new challenges. In such cases, teams should place such problems in a "parking lot" so they don't get lost and can be addressed later.