

MUL-T-MAT
& SUPPLY CO.
....MORE THAN JUST MATS

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What is 5 S?

5S is a reference to a list of five Japanese words. It is a philosophy, a way of organizing and managing the workspace and work flow with the intent to improve efficiency by eliminating waste, improving flow and reducing process unevenness. 5S is a method for keeping the workspace organized and goes beyond a simple housekeeping methodology.

The key targets of 5S are workplace morale, safety and efficiency. By assigning everything a location, time is not wasted by looking for things and it is quickly obvious when something is missing from its designated location. Standardization builds a clear understanding, between employees, of how work should be done and instills ownership of the process.

The 5S's are:

Phase 1 - **Seiri** Sorting: Going through all the tools, materials, etc., in the plant and work area and keeping only essential items. Everything else is stored or discarded.

Phase 2 - **Seiton** Straighten or Set in Order: Focuses on efficiency. When we translate this to "Straighten or Set in Order", it sounds like more sorting or sweeping, but the intent is to arrange the tools, equipment and parts in a manner that promotes work flow. For example, tools and equipment should be kept where they will be used (i.e. straighten the flow path), and the process should be set in an order that maximizes efficiency. For every thing there should be place and every thing should be in its place. (demarcation and labeling of place)

Phase 3 - **Seiso** Sweeping or Shining or Cleanliness: Systematic Cleaning or the need to keep the workplace clean as well as neat. At the end of each shift, the work area is cleaned up and everything is restored to its place. This makes it easy to know what goes where and have confidence that everything is where it should be. The key point is that maintaining cleanliness should be part of the daily work - not an occasional activity initiated when things get too messy.

Phase 4 - **Seiketsu** Standardizing: Standardized work practices or operating in a consistent and standardized fashion. Everyone knows exactly what his or her responsibilities are to keep above 3S's.

Phase 5 - **Shitsuke** Sustaining the discipline: Refers to maintaining and reviewing standards. Once the previous 4S's have been established, they become the new way to operate. Maintain the focus on this new way of operating, and do not allow a gradual decline back to the old ways of operating. However, when an issue arises such as a suggested improvement, a new way of working, a new tool or a new output requirement, then a review of the first 4S's is appropriate.

A sixth phase "Safety" is sometimes added. Purists, however, argue that adding it is unnecessary since following 5S correctly will result in a safe work environment.

There will have to be continuous education about maintaining standards. When there are changes that will affect the 5S program -- such as new equipment, new products or new work rules -- it is essential to make changes in the standards and provide training. A good way to continue educating employees and maintaining standards is to use 5S posters and signs.

Compiled from Wikipedia page

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5S_\(methodology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5S_(methodology))

What is Lean Manufacturing?

Lean manufacturing is a variation on the theme of efficiency based on optimizing flow.

Lean manufacturing or **lean production** , which is often known simply as " **Lean** ", is a production practice that considers the expenditure of resources for any goal other than the creation of value for the end customer to be wasteful, and thus a target for elimination. Basically, lean is centered around creating **More value with less work** . Lean manufacturing is a generic process management philosophy derived mostly from the [Toyota Production System](#) (TPS) (hence the term Toyotism is also prevalent) and identified as "Lean" only in the 1990s.

Lean manufacturing is a variation on the theme of [efficiency](#) based on optimizing flow.

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