

Value Stream Mapping

“Where are the losses in our process?”

Countless manufacturing companies must handle urgent orders on their lines, despite having high stock levels. On the shop floor, there are numerous buffers containing supplies, packing material and work in progress. Most of the time the content of these buffers is just waiting.

How can we (at a glance) gain a clear overview of the current situation of our manufacturing process?

Added Value or Loss?

The “Value stream” is the sum of all the activities that the raw materials must pass through to become a product in the hands of the customer.

These activities can be divided into steps that “Add Value” in the eyes of the customer, and steps that don’t add value to the product, the “Loss”. Common losses in a value stream are: waiting (for next step, for transportation, etc.), checking, and stock.

Value Stream Mapping is the method used to visualise the total material flow of a product group, and the information flow that keeps it going.

Making the map provides insight into the losses of both flows. It is all about *learning to see the losses*.

A Value Stream Map can be drawn from door to door in a production facility, but can also be made for the whole *Supply Chain*.

Approach

The tools of a Value Stream mapper are simple and effective:

- A pencil
- An eraser
- A white sheet of paper
- Eyes and ears

The map will *not* be made based on data from information systems, but by asking people and looking around on the shop floor. Stock and buffers will be counted manually, process times will be determined with a stopwatch.

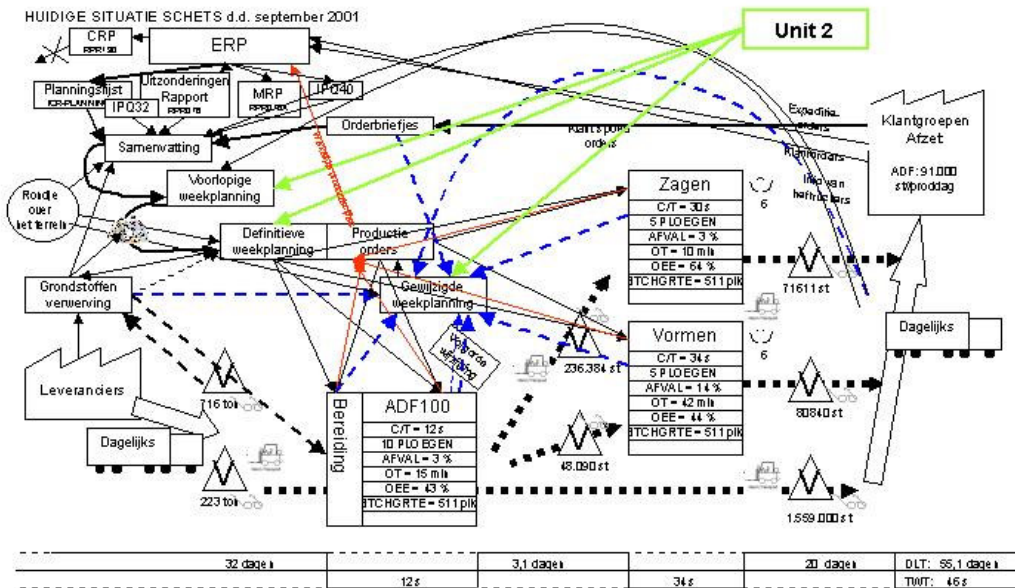
There are two golden rules for the Value Stream mapper:

1. Do it yourself (don’t let a consultant draw your Value Stream Map)
2. Seeing is believing (distrust existing lists and systems)

Result

When the map is complete it shows all losses:

- One sheet which shows the current state of the Value Stream, based on the material flow and the information flow: The start for improvement activities.
- The mapper has learnt to separate the losses from the Value Added activities.



Eliminating the losses can be started by drawing a “Future State Map” by using Flow Management Tools.

The role of Blom Consultancy

The first principle of Value Stream Mapping is: Do it yourself! Blom Consultancy’s role is:

- Training and supporting the company employees who make the Current State Map
- Supplying Flow Management Tools that can improve the current state
- Coaching employees in the process of developing a Future State Map and setting up an action plan to realise improvements.

More information?

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