

7 Deadly Wastes of Business Training

Training Waste (Muda) is any knowledge or skill transfer activity that is not required to successfully complete a task for either a revenue-generating or cost avoidance process (Non-Value-Adding). When training waste is removed, only the knowledge/skills required (Value-Adding) to help produce/deliver products or services and/or help avoid costs remain in the process. In keeping with the spirit of Lean, I used the original names of the types of waste as best I could. Those familiar with lean processing should recognize the list below.

Over Production - Courses

Overproduction occurs when additional, non-value-added courses not linked to a business goal or gap are added to an employee's curricula. Would you produce more widgets than what was ordered? Of course not..

Knowledge/Skills Inventory

Requiring employees to attend training on subjects/tasks they already know or can perform wastes valuable time and money. It's like buying extra inventory that you don't need.

Defects

Defects in training are caused by poor instructional design, resulting in ambiguous/erroneous materials and/or delivery modalities that are incongruent with the learning objectives.

Waiting - Scheduling

The longer employees wait between training and application, the more likely their new knowledge/skill will degrade. Wait too long, and you'll need to retrain them. Do you have the time and budget for that?

Transportation/Motion

Unnecessary transportation (content) and motion (people) are related to unnecessary or inefficient training delivery and learners' engagement. Why create an instructor-led course when a job aid would suffice?

Over Processing - Content

Over-processing occurs when training material includes more information than is required to close the performance gap. This is the difference between "nice to have" and "need to have" information.

Incorrect Use of Employees Abilities

Not allowing employees to apply new knowledge or skills after a learning event is wasted training and contributes to knowledge and skill degradation.