

The Complete Guide to

STANDARD WORK

History · Purpose · Creation · Deployment · Continuous Improvement

A Professional Reference for Lean Practitioners, Operations Leaders,
Quality Engineers, and Continuous Improvement Teams

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Why Standard Work Is the Foundation of Everything

Ask a hundred manufacturers why their quality is inconsistent, their costs are high, or their training takes too long, and most of them — if they are honest — will trace the problem back to the same root cause: the work is not standardized. Different operators do the same job differently. The best method lives in the head of the most experienced person on the floor. When that person retires or transfers, the knowledge walks out the door with them. When a new product launches, there is no reliable baseline from which to improve.

Standard Work is the foundational discipline that addresses all of this. It is, in essence, the documented, agreed-upon, repeatable best current method for performing any given task — defined in enough detail that it can be taught, followed, verified, and improved. It is not bureaucratic paperwork. It is not a way to control workers. It is the mechanism by which an organization captures its best thinking, protects against variation, enables training, and creates the stable baseline from which genuine continuous improvement becomes possible.

Standard Work is also the most misunderstood tool in the Lean toolkit. It is simultaneously one of the simplest ideas in operations management — do the best-known method, every time — and one of the most difficult to implement well. The difficulty is not technical. It is cultural. Creating Standard Work requires the humility to say "here is our current best method," the discipline to follow it even when individual judgment suggests otherwise, and the wisdom to know that the standard exists to be improved, not worshipped.

This guide covers everything: where Standard Work came from, what it is designed to accomplish, how to create it properly, how to deploy it effectively, and how to maintain it as a living system rather than letting it calcify into irrelevance. Whether you are a seasoned Lean practitioner looking to sharpen your approach, or an operations leader encountering this discipline for the first time, the principles here will give you everything you need to implement Standard Work in a way that actually works.

 *What Standard Work Is Not: Standard Work is not a time-and-motion study designed to extract maximum output from workers. It is not a tool for micromanagement. It is not a compliance document to satisfy auditors. And it is not a static artifact that, once created, is filed and forgotten. Standard Work is a living agreement — the current best method, owned by the people who do the work, designed to be followed, taught, and improved.*

Section 1: The History of Standard Work

Standard Work did not emerge fully formed from a single mind or a single moment. It evolved over more than a century of industrial practice, shaped by engineers, managers, and workers across multiple countries and industries. Understanding that history illuminates not only what Standard Work is, but why it is designed the way it is.

Frederick Winslow Taylor and Scientific Management (1880s–1910s)

The intellectual ancestor of Standard Work is Frederick Winslow Taylor's scientific management movement, which swept American industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Taylor, a Philadelphia-born mechanical engineer who spent years on the factory floor, observed something that seemed obvious once he named it: most industrial work was performed without any systematic analysis of the best method. Each worker simply developed their own approach through trial, error, and imitation of more experienced colleagues. The result was enormous variation in output, quality, and efficiency.

Taylor's solution was to apply the scientific method to work. He believed that for every task, there was one best method — determinable through careful observation, measurement, and analysis — and that this method should be documented, taught to every worker, and enforced consistently. His *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) codified this thinking and launched a revolution in industrial practice.

Taylor's legacy is complicated. His methods genuinely improved productivity in many settings. But his approach was fundamentally top-down: management decided the one best method; workers simply executed it. The human element — worker knowledge, judgment, and creativity — was minimized, not incorporated. This created lasting resentment in the labor movement and planted the seeds of the rigid, dehumanizing work environments that later became targets of both union organizing and, eventually, the Lean movement itself.

Despite these limitations, Taylor's core insight — that work methods should be analyzed, documented, and consistently applied — is the bedrock on which all subsequent Standard Work thinking was built.

Frank and Lillian Gilbreth: Motion Study and Human Factors (1900s–1920s)

Working roughly contemporaneously with Taylor, the husband-and-wife team of Frank and Lillian Gilbreth developed motion study — a rigorous approach to analyzing the physical movements required to perform a task and systematically eliminating unnecessary motion.

Frank Gilbreth famously reduced the number of motions required to lay a brick from 18 to 4, dramatically improving productivity without increasing worker effort.

Lillian Gilbreth, a psychologist by training, added a critical dimension that Taylor had largely ignored: the human element. She studied worker fatigue, satisfaction, and psychology, arguing that the best work methods were those that reduced physical and mental strain, not merely those that maximized output. Her contributions anticipated by decades the worker-centered approach that would eventually become central to the Toyota Production System.

The Gilbreths introduced the concept of "therbligs" — fundamental units of motion — and pioneered the use of film to analyze work methods in a level of detail impossible with the naked eye. Their work gave industrial engineers a rigorous analytical vocabulary for studying work that remains foundational in industrial engineering education today.

Henry Ford and Flow Production (1910s–1920s)

Henry Ford's moving assembly line, introduced at the Highland Park plant in 1913, represented the industrial application of Standard Work at a scale never previously attempted. Ford did not invent the assembly line, but he systematized it with a precision and completeness that transformed manufacturing. Every job on the Ford line was broken down into its smallest component tasks. Every task was assigned a defined time and sequence. Every worker performed the same standardized operations, repeatedly, with minimal variation.

The results were spectacular. The time to produce a Model T chassis dropped from over twelve hours to under two hours in a matter of months. The price of the Model T fell steadily for nearly two decades, making the automobile accessible to the American working class for the first time. Ford had demonstrated that radical standardization, combined with flow production, could simultaneously improve quality, reduce cost, and increase output — a combination that had seemed impossible before.

Ford's system also illustrated Standard Work's limitations when applied rigidly. Ford's obsession with the perfection of a fixed standard — famously encapsulated in his remark that customers could have any color they wanted "as long as it is black" — made the system brittle. When customer preferences shifted toward variety in the 1920s, Ford's inflexible standardization became a competitive liability, and General Motors surpassed Ford by offering customers choices that Ford's system could not accommodate. The lesson: standards must be living documents, not fixed monuments.

The Training Within Industry Program (1940s)

The Training Within Industry (TWI) program, developed by the U.S. government during World War II, represents perhaps the most direct ancestor of modern Standard Work as practiced in

Lean manufacturing. Faced with the sudden need to train millions of workers — many of them women and other groups with no previous factory experience — for critical defense production, the War Manpower Commission developed a systematic methodology for rapidly training workers to perform standardized tasks to a defined quality and time standard.

TWI's "Job Instruction" module, in particular, is remarkably similar to the Standard Work processes used in Lean factories today. Job Instruction broke each task into defined steps, identified the "key points" (quality-critical or safety-critical actions within each step), and specified the reasons for those key points. This three-level structure — step, key point, reason — is directly reflected in modern Standard Work documentation. TWI also insisted that the standard be taught through demonstration, practice, and verification rather than simply written instruction, a principle that remains central to effective Standard Work deployment.

Crucially, TWI was introduced to Japan after World War II as part of the American occupation's industrial reconstruction program. Japanese engineers, including those at what would become Toyota, studied TWI intensively. Its influence on the development of the Toyota Production System — and thus on all subsequent Lean practice — was profound and direct.

Toyota and the Birth of Modern Standard Work (1950s–1980s)

The Toyota Production System (TPS), developed primarily through the work of Taiichi Ohno and Shigeo Shingo from the 1950s through the 1970s, transformed Standard Work from an industrial engineering tool into a cornerstone of a comprehensive management philosophy. Toyota's approach differed from Taylor's in several critical ways that define modern Standard Work practice.

First, Toyota recognized that the purpose of standardization is not to freeze the best current method permanently, but to create a stable baseline from which improvement can be made deliberately. The famous Toyota principle — "Without a standard, there can be no Kaizen" — captures this precisely. If the method changes every time the operator changes, there is no way to determine whether a proposed improvement actually represents an improvement. The standard makes improvement visible.

Second, Toyota insisted that Standard Work be created and owned by the people who perform it, not imposed from above by industrial engineers. The operators on the line — the people with the deepest practical knowledge of the work — were expected to participate actively in defining, refining, and improving the standards for their own jobs. This worker ownership was both philosophically important (respecting workers as intelligent contributors, not interchangeable parts) and practically important (workers who help define the standard are far more likely to follow it).

Third, Toyota developed three specific Standard Work documents that together capture the full complexity of a standardized process: the Standard Work Combination Sheet (which shows the

interplay of operator time, machine time, and walking time), the Standard Work Chart (which shows the physical layout and operator movement pattern), and the Production Capacity Sheet (which establishes the maximum output capacity of the process). This documentation system remains the template for Standard Work in Lean operations today.

Ohno also connected Standard Work directly to his broader production system. Takt time — the rate at which products must be completed to meet customer demand — became the heartbeat around which all Standard Work was designed. The standard cycle time for any operation was set relative to takt time: no faster (which would create overproduction) and no slower (which would create a bottleneck). This connection between Standard Work and demand-driven flow production was one of Toyota's most powerful conceptual contributions.

Lean Reaches the West: 1990s to Present

The publication of *The Machine That Changed the World* by Womack, Jones, and Roos in 1990 — based on the MIT International Motor Vehicle Program's comparative study of global automotive manufacturing — introduced Toyota's methods to Western business audiences under the term "Lean manufacturing." Standard Work, as a core component of TPS, was included in this transmission, though it was often underemphasized relative to more dramatic tools like just-in-time production and kanban systems.

Through the 1990s and 2000s, Standard Work spread from automotive manufacturing into other industries — aerospace, healthcare, financial services, logistics, and software development — each adapting the core principles to their own contexts. Healthcare, in particular, has embraced Standard Work as a patient safety mechanism: the insight that standardized clinical processes reduce medical errors is directly analogous to the manufacturing quality insight that standardized production processes reduce defects.

Today, Standard Work is recognized not merely as a manufacturing tool but as a universal principle of operational excellence. Wherever work is complex, repetitive, performed by multiple people, or subject to quality requirements, Standard Work principles apply. The form of the documentation may change. The vocabulary may adapt. But the underlying logic — capture the best current method, make it the standard, teach it, follow it, improve it — remains constant across every application.

Era	Key Figure(s)	Contribution to Standard Work
1880s–1910s	Frederick Winslow Taylor	Scientific Management; "one best method" concept; time study; systematic work analysis
1900s–1920s	Frank & Lillian Gilbreth	Motion study; elimination of waste motion; human factors; therbligs; film analysis of work
1913–1920s	Henry Ford	Moving assembly line; flow production; radical standardization at industrial scale

Era	Key Figure(s)	Contribution to Standard Work
1940s	U.S. War Manpower Commission	Training Within Industry (TWI); Job Instruction method; step/key point/reason structure
1950s–1980s	Taiichi Ohno, Shigeo Shingo	Toyota Production System; takt-time-based Standard Work; worker ownership; SW as CI baseline
1990s–present	Womack, Jones, and global practitioners	Lean as universal framework; Standard Work extended to healthcare, services, and knowledge work

Section 2: The Purpose of Standard Work

Standard Work is often described as a tool for reducing variation. That is true, but incomplete. Standard Work serves multiple distinct purposes simultaneously, and understanding all of them is essential to implementing it in a way that captures its full value.

Purpose 1: Capturing and Preserving Knowledge

In most organizations, operational knowledge resides primarily in the heads of experienced workers. The best operators know things that are never written down: which machine setting produces the cleanest cut on a particular material, which visual cue indicates that a weld is about to fail, the sequence of motions that prevents fatigue-related errors during the final hour of a shift. This tacit knowledge is enormously valuable — and it is extraordinarily fragile.

Standard Work is the mechanism by which tacit knowledge becomes explicit knowledge — documented, transferable, and organizational rather than individual. When the most experienced operator participates in developing the standard, their knowledge is captured in a form that outlasts their tenure. When a new hire follows a well-constructed Standard Work document, they are benefiting from the accumulated wisdom of every experienced operator who contributed to its creation. The document is, in a meaningful sense, institutional memory made visible.

Purpose 2: Reducing Variation

Process variation is the enemy of quality, predictability, and efficiency. When the same task is performed differently by different operators — or differently by the same operator at different times — the output will vary. Some of that variation will produce defects. Some will produce rework. Some will create safety hazards. All of it creates unpredictability that propagates downstream through the production system.

Standard Work attacks variation at its source: the method of doing the work. When every operator follows the same defined sequence, performs each step in the same way, and uses the same tools in the same configuration, the process becomes predictable. Quality becomes consistent. Throughput becomes reliable. Variation that does occur is immediately visible as a deviation from the standard, making it detectable and addressable before it compounds.

Purpose 3: Enabling Effective Training

Without Standard Work, new employee training is a matter of finding an experienced operator willing to serve as a mentor and hoping they teach good habits. Training quality depends

entirely on the quality and consistency of the mentor. Different mentors teach different methods. Some habits passed down are genuinely best practice; others are workarounds that grew up around problems that no longer exist, or personal idiosyncrasies that happen to work for one body type or cognitive style but not others.

Standard Work transforms training from an informal apprenticeship into a systematic process. The document defines what must be taught. The key points identify the most critical elements — the ones where deviation is most likely to cause a defect or safety issue. The training process can be verified: the trainer can confirm that the trainee is performing each step correctly against the documented standard. Training becomes faster, more consistent, and more reliable.

Purpose 4: Creating the Baseline for Continuous Improvement

This is perhaps the most important and most frequently misunderstood purpose of Standard Work. The standard is not an endpoint — it is a starting line. Taiichi Ohno's assertion that "without a standard, there can be no Kaizen" reflects a profound operational truth: you cannot improve what you cannot measure, and you cannot measure what has no defined baseline.

When the current method is undefined, every proposed change is just one undefined method being substituted for another. There is no way to determine whether the change actually improved anything, because there was no defined "before" to compare against. When the current method is documented in a Standard Work document, proposed improvements can be tested against a clear baseline, the results can be measured objectively, and if the proposed method is genuinely better, the standard can be updated to reflect the improvement.

This cycle — standardize, stabilize, observe, improve, re-standardize — is the engine of genuine continuous improvement. Standard Work is not the opposite of improvement; it is the prerequisite for it.

Purpose 5: Establishing Management's Visual Control

Standard Work supports visual management by making the expected performance visible at the point of work. When every operator has a Standard Work Chart posted at their workstation showing the defined sequence, the expected cycle time, and the critical quality and safety checkpoints, supervisors and managers can perform meaningful process observation. They can see at a glance whether the work is being performed as designed. Deviations become immediately visible — not as personal failures, but as signals that something in the system needs attention.

This visibility transforms the role of management from reactive firefighting to proactive process observation. Managers are not waiting for defects or delays to tell them something has gone

wrong. They are observing the process against the standard in real time and addressing deviations before they produce downstream consequences.

Purpose 6: Supporting Safety

Standard Work is a fundamental safety tool, though this is often underappreciated. Ergonomic hazards — the cumulative strain injuries that are among the most costly in manufacturing — are frequently the product of inconsistent work methods. One operator holds a part in a way that avoids wrist strain; another holds it in a way that creates repetitive stress. Without a standard, both methods are equally "correct," and the harmful one may propagate simply because it is easier to learn.

Standard Work documents explicitly incorporate the safest known method. Safety checkpoints — points in the sequence where a specific safety action is required — can be called out as key points, making safety compliance a built-in element of the standard rather than a separate overlay. Deviations from the safety-designed method are visible violations of the standard, triggering the same management response as quality or efficiency deviations.

Purpose	What It Solves	Who Benefits Most
Capture Knowledge	Knowledge lost when experienced workers leave	HR, Training, Operations
Reduce Variation	Inconsistent quality and unpredictable output	Quality, Customers
Enable Training	Slow, inconsistent new employee onboarding	Training, Supervisors, New Hires
Enable Improvement	Inability to sustain gains or measure change	CI Teams, Management
Visual Control	Reactive management; problems found too late	Supervisors, Managers
Support Safety	Inconsistent methods creating ergonomic/safety risk	Workers, Safety, EHS

Section 3: How to Create Standard Work

Creating Standard Work is a rigorous process. Done well, it produces documents that are genuinely useful — followed by operators, used by trainers, and referenced by supervisors during process observation. Done poorly, it produces binders that sit on shelves and accumulate dust. The difference between these outcomes is almost entirely a matter of process and discipline, not intellectual difficulty.

🔗 The Golden Rule of Standard Work Creation: The standard must be created by the people who do the work, not for them by engineers or managers. Operators have knowledge that no industrial engineer observing from outside the process can fully access. Their participation is not a nice-to-have — it is what makes the standard accurate, credible, and owned.

Prerequisites Before You Begin

Standard Work cannot be created for a chaotic, unstable process. Attempting to document an unstable process simply captures the chaos in a document, which is not useful. Before creating Standard Work, certain prerequisite conditions must be in place:

- **Process stability:** The process must be capable of producing acceptable output consistently before it can be standardized. If quality is erratic or equipment is unreliable, fix those problems first.
- **Defined takt time:** You must know the rate at which the process must operate to meet customer demand. Standard Work is designed around takt time; without it, you cannot assess whether the current method is adequate.
- **Reliable tooling and equipment:** If tools are worn, equipment is poorly maintained, or tooling varies between cycles, the work cannot be standardized. Equipment reliability is a prerequisite, not a byproduct.
- **Management commitment:** Creating Standard Work requires taking experienced operators away from production to participate in observation and documentation. This requires management commitment to prioritize the process.

Step 1: Define the Scope and Boundaries

Start by defining the exact scope of the process to be standardized. Standard Work is most effective when applied to clearly bounded, repeatable tasks. Define:

- **The starting trigger:** What event or input marks the beginning of this work cycle?
- **The ending point:** What defines completion — what is handed off, and to whom?

- The operator(s): Who performs this work? Are there multiple operators doing the same job (in which case all should participate in the standard creation)?
- The frequency: How many times per shift, day, or cycle is this task performed?


Be precise about scope. "Assembly Line Operator" is too broad; "Final Assembly Station 7 — Door Panel Installation" is appropriately scoped. Standard Work for a complex process is built from multiple linked standards for component tasks, not from a single sweeping document that tries to capture everything at once.

Step 2: Observe the Current Best Method

Before writing a word, observe the work being performed — multiple times, by multiple operators. The goal at this stage is not to capture the average method or the typical method, but to identify the current best method: the sequence of steps that consistently produces acceptable quality in the least time with the least physical stress.

Observation should be direct, at the point of work, not from an office reviewing video (though video can supplement observation). The observer should watch complete work cycles, not snapshots. Key observation discipline:

- Time every cycle of the observation period, not just a sample. Variation in cycle times is itself informative.
- Note the sequence of steps performed by each operator. Are they the same? Where do they differ? Why?
- Identify quality checkpoints — moments in the cycle where the operator makes a quality judgment, performs a check, or takes an action that directly affects output quality.
- Note safety-critical moments: actions where improper technique could cause injury or ergonomic strain.
- Ask questions respectfully: "I noticed you do this step before that one — can you tell me why?" Experienced operators often have important reasons for their sequence that are not obvious to an observer.

 *On Time Observation: Use a dedicated time observation sheet to record each element of work separately. Record at least 10 complete cycles. Calculate the average time for each element, note the fastest reliable time (not the outlier fastest), and flag any elements with high time variability — variability signals that the method for that element is not yet stable and may need attention before the standard is set.*

Step 3: Identify the Three Standard Work Elements

Toyota's Standard Work framework identifies three essential elements that must be defined for any standardized operation:

Element 1: Takt Time

Takt time is the heartbeat of the production system — the rate at which products must be completed to meet customer demand. It is calculated as:

$$\text{Takt Time} = \text{Available Production Time} \div \text{Customer Demand}$$

For example: if a facility has 480 minutes of available production time per shift and customer demand is 240 units per shift, takt time is 2 minutes per unit. The standard cycle time for every operation in the production system must be at or below 2 minutes.

Takt time is not a target for individual operators; it is the pace of the entire system. It provides the frame within which Standard Work is designed and the benchmark against which cycle times are assessed.

Element 2: Work Sequence

The work sequence is the defined order in which tasks are performed. This is not merely a list of tasks — it is the specific sequence that produces the best combination of quality, safety, and efficiency. The work sequence answers the question: "In what order should these steps be performed, and why does that order matter?"

Sequence matters for several reasons: some steps must precede others for quality reasons (you cannot inspect before assembly), some sequences reduce walking and motion waste, some sequences distribute physical effort more ergonomically across the work cycle, and some sequences minimize the risk of errors (placing quality checks where errors are most likely to occur).

Element 3: Standard Work-in-Process (WIP)

Standard WIP is the minimum amount of work-in-process inventory required to perform the work sequence smoothly without creating stoppages. In a one-piece-flow operation, standard WIP may be zero (or one piece — the piece being worked on). In operations with machine cycles, standard WIP may include pieces in various stages of processing.

Defining standard WIP is important because excess WIP hides problems (you cannot see a machine malfunction when there is a buffer of inventory in front of it), and insufficient WIP creates starvation and stoppages. Standard WIP is the minimum that makes the process work — no more, no less.

Step 4: Create the Standard Work Documentation

Toyota's Standard Work documentation system uses three primary documents, each capturing a different dimension of the standardized process. Together, they provide a complete picture of how the work should be performed.

Document 1: Standard Work Combination Sheet

The Standard Work Combination Sheet (also called the Standard Work Combination Table) shows the relationship between operator work time, machine cycle time, and walking time for each step in the work sequence. It makes visible the interactions between the operator and the equipment — where the operator must wait for a machine, where they can perform other tasks during a machine cycle, and where time is consumed by walking between stations.

The combination sheet is the primary tool for identifying waste in the work design. Waiting time (operator idle while a machine cycles) is immediately visible. Excessive walking appears as a large walking time block. These wastes become targets for work redesign.

Document 2: Standard Work Chart (Layout Diagram)

The Standard Work Chart is a physical layout diagram of the work area, showing equipment positions, material locations, and the movement path of the operator as they perform the work sequence. The operator's path is drawn as a line on the layout diagram, numbered to correspond with each step in the sequence.

The Standard Work Chart serves two purposes. First, it makes the physical motion of the operator visible — loops, backtracking, and excessive travel become immediately apparent on the diagram and can be targeted for elimination. Second, it is a training aid: a new operator can use the chart to understand where they should be at each point in the sequence and what a correctly executed cycle looks like from a spatial perspective.

Document 3: Production Capacity Sheet

The Production Capacity Sheet calculates the maximum output capacity of each machine or process step in the operation, based on cycle times, changeover times, and maintenance allowances. It answers the question: "What is the maximum throughput this process is capable of achieving?" This is compared to takt time to verify that the process is capable of meeting customer demand, and to identify which operations are at or near capacity (potential bottlenecks) versus which have available capacity.

Step 5: Writing Step-by-Step Work Instructions

Beyond Toyota's three-document system, most organizations create detailed written work instructions that accompany the Standard Work documents and provide the step-by-step detail needed for training. These instructions follow the Job Instruction format developed in TWI, which remains the most effective structure for operational work documentation:

Level	What It Captures	Example
Step	The major work element — a distinct action that moves the task forward	"Apply adhesive to the flange surface"
Key Point	The specific aspect of the step that is quality-critical, safety-critical, or technique-critical	"Apply in a continuous bead, 2–3mm diameter, no gaps"
Reason	Why the key point matters — the consequence of deviation	"Gaps in bead allow moisture ingress, causing delamination in field"

This three-level structure is powerful because it teaches understanding, not just mimicry. When an operator knows not only what to do and how to do it, but why the "how" matters, they are far better equipped to recognize when something is going wrong and to make intelligent decisions at the boundary of the standard.

Work instructions should also specify: required tools and their specifications, required materials and their quantities, quality checkpoints and acceptance criteria, safety requirements (PPE, lockout/tagout, ergonomic considerations), and references to any relevant specifications, drawings, or standards.

Step 6: Photographs and Visual Aids

Text descriptions of physical work are inherently limited. A photograph showing the correct grip, the correct positioning of a component, or the correct visual appearance of a completed step communicates in seconds what paragraphs of text struggle to convey. Standard Work documentation should include photographs or illustrations at every step where the correct technique is not self-evident from a text description.

Effective visual documentation practices:

- Photograph the correct method from the operator's perspective, not from a management observation point.
- Include "negative examples" — photographs showing what incorrect technique looks like — for the highest-risk steps where deviation is most consequential.
- Use callouts and annotations on photographs to highlight the specific feature being demonstrated.

- Keep photographs current. A photograph showing outdated equipment, an obsolete tool, or a deprecated part number is actively misleading.

Step 7: Review, Test, and Validate

A draft Standard Work document should never be deployed without validation. Validation means testing the document against actual work performance — having an operator follow the written standard exactly as written and observing whether it produces the correct output, in the defined time, without forcing the operator into impossible or confusing situations.

Validation should include:

- Operator readability review: Can the operator who will use this document read and understand every step without interpretation? Jargon, ambiguous instructions, and unclear photographs are failure modes at this stage.
- Takt time verification: Does following the standard as written allow the operator to complete the cycle within takt time? If not, the standard must be revised.
- Safety review: Does the standard, as written, incorporate all required safety practices? Is it possible to follow the standard exactly as written and inadvertently create a safety hazard?
- Quality verification: Does the output produced by following the standard meet all defined quality requirements? Validation should include a quality inspection of the output produced.
- Cross-operator consistency: Have multiple operators followed the validated standard and produced consistent results? Consistency across operators is the ultimate test of a well-written standard.

Section 4: How to Deploy Standard Work

Creating excellent Standard Work documentation is necessary but not sufficient. Documents that are created but not deployed — not trained to, not followed, not posted at the point of work — produce no operational benefit. Deployment is where the investment in creation pays dividends, and where most Standard Work implementations fail.

The Training Cycle: Four-Step Job Instruction

TWI's four-step Job Instruction method remains the most effective approach for training Standard Work. The method is designed to ensure that the trainee not only understands the standard intellectually but can perform it correctly and independently. The four steps are:

Step	Trainer Action	Trainee Action	Purpose
1 — Prepare	Set up the workstation exactly as specified in the SW document. Explain what will be taught and why it matters. Assess trainee's prior knowledge.	Observe workstation setup; ask clarifying questions.	Establish readiness; reduce anxiety; confirm baseline.
2 — Present	Perform the complete operation at normal pace, narrating each step, key point, and reason. Repeat at reduced pace, emphasizing critical elements. Repeat again, inviting questions.	Observe carefully; ask questions; take notes if appropriate.	Demonstrate the correct method with full explanation.
3 — Try Out	Observe trainee performing the operation. Correct errors immediately and specifically. Have trainee narrate steps and key points while performing.	Perform the operation while narrating steps, key points, and reasons aloud. Repeat multiple times until correct and confident.	Confirm understanding through performance; identify gaps.
4 — Follow Up	Assign responsible follow-up person. Define check-in frequency. Gradually reduce support as competence develops. Update training record.	Perform independently with defined check-ins. Ask questions when uncertain. Report any problems with the standard immediately.	Build independence; catch late-emerging errors; confirm mastery.

Posting Standard Work at the Point of Use

Standard Work documents should be posted at or immediately adjacent to the workstation where the work is performed — not filed in a binder in the supervisor's office, not stored on a shared drive accessible only from a desktop computer across the room. The point-of-use posting principle recognizes that Standard Work is a reference tool for operators, not a management record-keeping document.

Effective point-of-use posting:

- Mount the Standard Work Chart (layout diagram) at the workstation at eye level, visible from the operator's primary working position.
- Mount the Standard Work Combination Sheet alongside for operator and supervisor reference.
- Post detailed work instructions where the operator can consult them during the work cycle without moving away from the work area.
- Use durable, laminated materials that withstand the industrial environment. A work instruction destroyed by coolant or contaminated by handling within a week of posting is useless.
- Ensure lighting is adequate to read documents without strain. Posting a standard in shadow is not posting it at all.

Supervisor Standard Work: Observation and Adherence

Operator Standard Work requires a parallel structure: Supervisor Standard Work. A supervisor's job — like an operator's job — consists of defined tasks performed in a defined sequence at defined intervals. Standard Work for supervisors typically includes a schedule of process observations: defined times during each shift when the supervisor observes specific operations against the posted Standard Work.

During a Standard Work observation, the supervisor watches the operator perform the standardized sequence and compares what they observe against what the Standard Work document specifies. The observation is structured around three questions:

- Is the operator following the defined work sequence?
- Is the operator meeting the defined cycle time?
- Is the quality checkpoint behavior occurring as specified?

Deviations from any of these three criteria require follow-up — not punishment, but inquiry. "I noticed you performed step 4 before step 3 today — can you help me understand why?" The answer may reveal that the standard is wrong or outdated (in which case it should be updated), that the operator has developed a better method (in which case it should become the new

standard), or that the operator is taking a shortcut that creates a downstream risk (in which case retraining is appropriate).

👁 *Process Observation Is Not Surveillance: The purpose of supervisor Standard Work observation is not to police operators but to understand whether the standard is working. Supervisors who observe with a punitive mindset will find that operators begin hiding deviations rather than reporting them — the worst possible outcome. The mindset must be: "I am observing the process, not judging the person. What I see will help me understand whether the standard is right, whether training is adequate, and whether there are system-level problems I need to address."*

Managing the Transition Period

When Standard Work is introduced for the first time, or when an existing standard is significantly revised, there is an inevitable transition period during which the new method feels slower, more effortful, and less natural than the habitual method it replaces. This is normal and must be managed deliberately.

Experienced operators who have been performing a task the same way for years have internalized their method to the point of automatic execution. Being asked to follow a defined sequence — even one that is demonstrably better — requires them to override habit and think consciously about each step. Performance typically slows and may feel less comfortable initially. This is the learning curve, not evidence that the standard is wrong.

Managing the transition period effectively requires:

- Honest communication about why the standard is being implemented and what it is designed to achieve. Operators who understand the purpose are more tolerant of the transition discomfort.
- Increased supervisor presence and support during the transition, focused on coaching rather than evaluation.
- A defined time horizon: "We will evaluate this standard after 30 days and incorporate any improvements identified during that period." This signals that the standard is a starting point, not a permanent imposition.
- Explicit channels for operators to report problems with the standard. If the standard is wrong — if it specifies an unsafe technique, an impossible time, or an impractical sequence — operators must be able to say so without consequences.

Metrics for Standard Work Deployment

Standard Work deployment should be measured to verify that it is actually happening and that it is producing the expected results. Key metrics include:

Metric	What It Measures	Target	Warning Signal
Standard Work Coverage	Percentage of defined processes with current, posted Standard Work documents	100% of critical processes	Any critical process without a posted, current standard
Adherence Rate	Percentage of observed cycles in which the operator follows the defined sequence	>95% for established standards	<90% signals either training gap or standard deficiency
Training Completion Rate	Percentage of operators trained and verified on current Standard Work	100% before deployment	Any operator performing work without documented training verification
Document Currency	Percentage of Standard Work documents reviewed/updated within defined review cycle	100% current (no expired standards)	Standards older than defined review period without review confirmation
Deviation Report Rate	Frequency of operator-reported deviations or standard improvement suggestions	Healthy organizations: >1 suggestion per operator per quarter	Zero reports may indicate operator disengagement, not perfect standards

Section 5: How to Maintain Standard Work

Standard Work maintenance is where most implementations fail. The creation phase generates energy and attention. Deployment requires discipline and management commitment. But maintenance — the ongoing work of keeping standards current, relevant, and actually followed — requires a systematic approach that most organizations never fully develop. The result is standards that become outdated, are quietly abandoned, and eventually exist only on paper while actual work reverts to pre-standardization variation.

✂ The Calcification Problem: Standard Work that is never updated calcifies — it begins to reflect how work was done rather than how it should be done. Operators learn to work around the outdated standard rather than report it. Supervisors stop checking adherence because everyone knows the document is wrong. New hires are trained on the outdated standard and must then unlearn it. The document becomes, in the worst case, actively counterproductive — a compliance burden without operational benefit.

Triggers for Standard Work Review and Update

Standard Work should be reviewed and updated whenever any of the following conditions occur:

Trigger	Why It Requires SW Update	Who Initiates
Equipment or tooling change	New equipment may require different sequence, different key points, or different timing	Engineering / Maintenance
Material or component change	Different supplier materials may have different handling requirements, tolerances, or quality characteristics	Engineering / Quality
Quality escape or defect analysis	If a defect occurred that the current standard should have prevented, the standard needs review — either it was not followed (training issue) or it was inadequate (standard issue)	Quality / CI Team
Safety incident or near-miss	Any safety event that occurred while the standard was being followed indicates the standard has a safety deficiency	Safety / EHS
Process improvement (Kaizen)	A confirmed improvement to the method must be incorporated into the standard immediately — the standard is how improvements are sustained	CI Team / Operators

Trigger	Why It Requires SW Update	Who Initiates
Engineered change order	Any formal change to product specifications, manufacturing processes, or process parameters requires standard review	Engineering
Periodic review cycle	Standards should be reviewed on a defined schedule (typically annually for stable processes, quarterly for high-risk or high-variability processes) regardless of change triggers	Operations / Quality
Operator-identified issue	Operators performing the work are the first to identify when the standard is wrong — there must be a clear, consequence-free path to report this	Operator → Supervisor

The Standard Work Review Process

A systematic review process for Standard Work should follow a defined sequence to ensure that updates are accurate, approved by the appropriate parties, trained to all affected operators, and documented properly. A robust review process includes:

1. Identify the need for update (via trigger above). Document the reason for the proposed change.
2. Gather the relevant operators, engineers, and quality representatives to review the proposed change against the current standard.
3. Observe the current method versus the proposed new method. If the proposed method has not been tested, pilot it under observation before approving.
4. Verify that the new method meets quality requirements, takt time requirements, and safety requirements. Do not approve a change that fixes one problem by creating another.
5. Update the Standard Work documents — all three Toyota documents plus detailed work instructions and photographs. Partial updates (changing one document but not others) create internal inconsistency.
6. Revise the revision date and revision history on all updated documents. Control of document versions is essential; operators must always be working from the current version.
7. Train all affected operators on the change before implementing. Do not simply post a revised document and assume operators will read and internalize the changes.
8. Conduct a follow-up observation after the change is implemented to verify that operators are following the updated standard and that the expected improvement is being achieved.
9. Archive the superseded standard with its revision history. If problems arise with the new standard, the previous version should be retrievable for comparison.

Document Control for Standard Work

Standard Work requires disciplined document control to prevent the confusion created by multiple versions of the same standard circulating simultaneously. Effective document control includes:

- A unique document number for every Standard Work document, with revision level clearly marked.
- A defined approval workflow: who must review and approve a standard before it is posted? For most operations, this includes the process engineer, quality representative, and operations supervisor at minimum.
- A "controlled copy" system: posted copies at workstations are controlled copies, identified as current. When a standard is updated, the old controlled copy is physically removed and replaced. Operators working from uncontrolled copies is a document control failure.
- A master list of all current Standard Work documents with their revision levels, posted dates, and next review dates. This list makes it possible to verify at any time that all documents are current.
- Electronic document management systems can be valuable for version control and retrieval, but must not replace the physical point-of-use posting requirement. A standard that lives only in a computer database and is not posted at the workstation is not deployed Standard Work.

Layered Process Audits (LPA): Sustaining Adherence

A Layered Process Audit is a structured, multi-level observation system designed to sustain Standard Work adherence over time. Rather than relying solely on supervisor observation, LPAs create a pyramid of process verification: supervisors verify adherence daily, managers verify weekly, and senior leaders verify monthly. Each level focuses on the same defined list of critical Standard Work items — the checkpoints most likely to produce quality or safety failures if not followed.

LPAs are effective for several reasons. First, they demonstrate visible leadership commitment to Standard Work: when operators see their plant manager personally verifying that Standard Work is being followed, they understand that this is a genuine organizational priority, not a middle-management initiative. Second, they catch and correct adherence problems before they compound into quality escapes or safety incidents. Third, they surface problems with the standards themselves — if the same deviation is observed repeatedly across operators, it is more likely that the standard is wrong than that every operator is wrong.


Kaizen and Standard Work: The Improvement Cycle

The relationship between Standard Work and continuous improvement (Kaizen) is one of the most important to understand correctly, because it is so frequently misunderstood. Standard Work and Kaizen are not in tension — they are partners in a disciplined improvement cycle.

The correct Kaizen cycle for Standard Work follows this sequence:

- **STANDARDIZE:** Establish the current best method as the standard. This is the baseline.
- **STABILIZE:** Ensure that everyone is following the standard consistently. Variation in adherence makes improvement measurement impossible.
- **OBSERVE:** Watch the process against the standard. Identify waste, difficulty, and inconsistency. Generate improvement ideas.
- **IMPROVE:** Test the proposed improvement against the current standard. Measure the results objectively. Did it actually produce improvement?
- **RE-STANDARDIZE:** If the improvement is confirmed, update the standard to incorporate it. The new standard becomes the new baseline.

The critical discipline is step 5 — re-standardizing after improvement. This is where most organizations fail. An improvement is made, results are celebrated, and then the team moves on — without updating the Standard Work document. Three months later, the improvement has been partially or completely abandoned as operators drift back to old habits, because the improvement was never embedded in the standard. No standard update equals no sustained improvement.

 *The Improvement Cycle in Practice: Ohno famously said that he could tell how good an organization's Standard Work was by looking at how frequently their standards were updated. Frequent updates signal active improvement. Documents that never change signal either perfection (unlikely) or stagnation (common). The goal is not a static document — it is a living record of the organization's best current thinking, updated continuously as that thinking improves.*

Common Maintenance Failures and How to Avoid Them

Failure Mode	What It Looks Like	Root Cause	Prevention
Standards freeze after initial creation	Documents dated 3–5 years ago with no revision history	No defined review cycle; no trigger-based update process	Define mandatory review frequency; link updates to change management process

Failure Mode	What It Looks Like	Root Cause	Prevention
Documents not posted at point of use	Standards in binders in supervisor's office; operators have never seen the document they're supposed to follow	Failure to distinguish "document exists" from "document is deployed"	Define posting requirement; include in LPA checklist
Operators trained on outdated version	Training records show completion but operators use superseded method	Training not retrained when standard is updated	Mandatory retraining for all changes; link training records to document revisions
Deviations not reported	No deviation reports; standards appear followed but audit reveals widespread non-adherence	Punitive response to deviations; operators hide problems rather than report them	Create psychological safety; treat deviations as process signals, not operator failures
Improvements not captured in standard	Kaizen events produce improvements that disappear within 90 days	Update of standard not included in Kaizen close-out requirements	Make SW update a mandatory deliverable of every Kaizen event
Parallel systems create confusion	Multiple versions of same standard circulating; operators don't know which is current	Poor document control; no controlled copy system	Implement document control system; require retrieval of superseded copies before posting new version

Section 6: Standard Work in Special Contexts

While Standard Work was developed in manufacturing, its principles apply wherever work is complex, repetitive, and performed by multiple people to a defined quality standard. The form of the documentation adapts to context; the underlying logic remains constant.

Standard Work in Healthcare

Healthcare has become one of the most important application domains for Standard Work, driven by the recognition that medical errors — many of which are attributable to process variation and inconsistency — are a leading cause of preventable patient harm. The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Virginia Mason Medical Center, and numerous other healthcare systems have implemented Standard Work as a patient safety tool.

In healthcare, Standard Work takes the form of:

- Clinical protocols and care pathways: defined sequences for managing specific conditions or performing specific procedures, based on evidence-based best practice.
- Surgical checklists: a form of Standard Work that gained global attention through Atul Gawande's research showing that simple standardized checklists dramatically reduce surgical complications and deaths.
- Medication administration standards: defined sequences for medication preparation, labeling, and administration that reduce medication errors.
- Patient handoff protocols: standardized communication formats (such as SBAR — Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation) that ensure critical patient information is reliably transferred between caregivers.

Healthcare Standard Work faces a distinctive cultural challenge: clinical autonomy. Physicians, in particular, are trained to exercise independent judgment and may resist the implication that a defined standard is more reliable than their expertise. The resolution is the same as in manufacturing: the standard captures the best current evidence-based practice for typical cases; clinical judgment governs exceptions. Standard Work and clinical expertise are not in conflict — the standard is the default; judgment governs departures from the default.

Standard Work for Knowledge Work and Office Processes

Applying Standard Work to knowledge work — the work of engineers, analysts, managers, and other office-based roles — requires more flexibility than manufacturing applications, but the core principle applies wherever processes are repetitive and quality-sensitive.

Office processes that benefit from Standard Work include:

- Order processing and customer service workflows
- Engineering change order management
- Financial closing processes
- New product development stage-gate reviews
- Purchasing and supplier qualification processes
- Human resources onboarding sequences

Standard Work for office processes typically takes the form of defined process flowcharts with roles, handoffs, and quality checkpoints identified — supplemented by detailed work instructions for the highest-risk or most variable steps. The Standard Work Combination Sheet is less applicable in office settings where machine cycle times are not a factor, but the concepts of defined sequence, defined quality checkpoints, and visible management of adherence apply equally.

Standard Work for Complex and Variable Processes

A common objection to Standard Work is that "our work is too complex to standardize" or "every situation is different." This objection confuses standardization with rigidity. Standard Work does not require that every situation be handled identically — it requires that the defined best practice be followed for defined standard situations, and that deviations from the standard be recognized as such, managed consciously, and learned from.

For complex processes, Standard Work can be applied at multiple levels:

- Standard decision frameworks: defined criteria for making common decisions, so that judgment is applied consistently even if the specific output varies.
- Standard process sequences: the defined order of steps even when the content of each step varies.
- Standard checkpoints: defined verification points in a process where quality is confirmed, regardless of path taken to reach that point.
- Standard exception handling: defined responses to the most common deviations from standard conditions, so that exceptions are handled consistently rather than improvised every time.

Digital and Technology-Enabled Standard Work

Technology is increasingly enabling more sophisticated forms of Standard Work documentation, deployment, and verification. Digital manufacturing systems, manufacturing execution systems (MES), and quality management systems (QMS) can embed Standard Work directly into the production workflow in ways that paper documents cannot.

Technology applications in Standard Work include:

- Electronic work instructions on tablets or monitors at workstations, with embedded video demonstrations, interactive step confirmation, and real-time quality data capture.
- Poka-yoke systems that prevent operators from proceeding to the next step without completing the previous step, enforcing the defined sequence mechanically.
- Digital deviation capture: systems that flag when a process parameter deviates from the defined standard in real time, enabling immediate response.
- Learning management systems that link training completion records directly to Standard Work document revisions, automatically flagging retraining requirements when standards are updated.

Technology-enabled Standard Work can dramatically improve adherence and reduce the administrative burden of maintenance. However, the same principles apply: the standard must be accurate, the technology must be reliable, and the human factors — operator training, supervisor observation, management commitment — must be present. Technology amplifies good Standard Work practice; it cannot substitute for it.

Quick Reference: Standard Work at a Glance

The Three Standard Work Documents

Document	What It Shows	Primary User	Key Question Answered
Standard Work Combination Sheet	Time relationship between operator work, machine cycle, and walking time for each step	Engineers, Supervisors	Where is time being consumed, and where is there waiting or imbalance?
Standard Work Chart (Layout)	Physical layout of work area with operator movement path numbered by step	Operators, Trainers, Supervisors	Where should the operator be at each step, and is the movement pattern efficient?
Production Capacity Sheet	Maximum output capacity of each process step based on cycle times and availability	Engineers, Operations Management	Can this process meet takt time demand, and where are the capacity constraints?
Detailed Work Instructions (Job Instruction format)	Step-by-step description with key points and reasons, supported by photographs	Operators, Trainers	Exactly how should each step be performed, and why does it matter?

Standard Work Takt Time Quick Reference

Available Time (minutes/shift)	Demand 120 units	Demand 180 units	Demand 240 units	Demand 300 units	Demand 480 units
420 min (7 hr + breaks)	3.5 min/unit	2.33 min/unit	1.75 min/unit	1.4 min/unit	0.88 min/unit
450 min (7.5 hr + breaks)	3.75 min/unit	2.5 min/unit	1.875 min/unit	1.5 min/unit	0.94 min/unit
480 min (8 hr + breaks)	4.0 min/unit	2.67 min/unit	2.0 min/unit	1.6 min/unit	1.0 min/unit
510 min (8.5 hr + breaks)	4.25 min/unit	2.83 min/unit	2.125 min/unit	1.7 min/unit	1.06 min/unit
960 min (two 8-hr shifts)	8.0 min/unit	5.33 min/unit	4.0 min/unit	3.2 min/unit	2.0 min/unit

Standard Work Creation Checklist

Phase	Checklist Item	Complete?
Prerequisites	Process is stable and capable of producing acceptable output	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prerequisites	Takt time is defined and verified	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prerequisites	Equipment and tooling are reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observation	Minimum 10 complete cycles observed and timed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observation	Multiple operators observed (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observation	Quality and safety checkpoints identified	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation	Standard Work Combination Sheet completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation	Standard Work Chart (layout) completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation	Production Capacity Sheet completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation	Job Instruction work instructions written (step / key point / reason)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documentation	Photographs included for all critical steps	<input type="checkbox"/>
Validation	Operator readability review completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Validation	Takt time verified with completed standard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Validation	Safety review completed and approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Validation	Quality verification completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deployment	All affected operators trained using 4-step Job Instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deployment	Training records completed and filed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deployment	Documents posted at point of use (controlled copies)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deployment	Document number, revision level, and review date assigned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintenance	Next review date scheduled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintenance	Trigger-based update process defined	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintenance	Supervisor Standard Work observation schedule defined	<input type="checkbox"/>

Key Terms Glossary

Term	Definition
Takt Time	The rate at which products must be completed to meet customer demand. Calculated as: Available Production Time ÷ Customer Demand.

Term	Definition
Cycle Time	The actual time required to complete one cycle of a defined operation. Must be at or below takt time.
Standard Work	The documented, agreed-upon, repeatable best current method for performing a specific task.
Standard Work Combination Sheet	Document showing the time relationship between operator work time, machine cycle time, and walking time.
Standard Work Chart	Physical layout diagram showing the operator movement path for a standardized operation.
Production Capacity Sheet	Document calculating the maximum output capacity of each process step.
Key Point	Within a work instruction step, the specific aspect of the step that is quality-critical, safety-critical, or technique-critical.
Standard WIP	The minimum work-in-process inventory required to perform a work sequence smoothly without stoppages.
Job Instruction (JI)	TWI-derived training method using four steps: Prepare, Present, Try Out, Follow Up.
Layered Process Audit (LPA)	Multi-level observation system in which supervisors, managers, and senior leaders verify Standard Work adherence at defined frequencies.
Kaizen	Continuous improvement through small, incremental changes. Requires Standard Work as the baseline from which improvements are measured.
Poka-Yoke	Error-proofing device or method that prevents a mistake from occurring or makes a mistake immediately obvious. Often used to enforce Standard Work compliance.
Adherence Rate	The percentage of observed work cycles in which the operator follows the defined Standard Work sequence.

Final Thoughts — Standard Work as Organizational Discipline

Standard Work is, at its core, an expression of organizational respect: respect for the knowledge of experienced workers (by capturing it), respect for the time and dignity of new workers (by giving them a reliable foundation to learn from), respect for customers (by delivering consistent quality), and respect for the people who do the work (by creating safe, ergonomically sound methods rather than leaving safety to chance).

The organizations that implement Standard Work most effectively are those that have internalized this underlying respect. They do not use Standard Work as a control mechanism — a way to eliminate operator judgment and creativity. They use it as a platform — the stable, agreed-upon foundation from which continuous improvement, innovation, and genuine operational mastery can be built.

The most common failure in Standard Work implementation is not technical. Documents are not especially difficult to write. Takt time is not especially difficult to calculate. The most common failure is cultural: the failure to genuinely involve operators in creating and improving the standards; the failure to treat deviations as signals rather than offenses; the failure to update standards when improvements are found; the failure to maintain the management discipline of process observation over the months and years after the initial implementation energy has dissipated.

Sustaining Standard Work requires exactly the discipline that Standard Work itself embodies: doing the defined thing, consistently, even when it is inconvenient, even when individual judgment suggests a shortcut, even when the urgency of the moment argues against the process. An organization that cannot sustain its own management system will not sustain its operators' work systems.

A few principles worth carrying forward from this guide:

- Create standards with the people who do the work, not for them.
- Post standards where they are used, not where they are safe from contamination.
- Treat every deviation as a question, not an accusation.
- Update the standard every time the process improves. An improvement not captured in the standard is not sustained.
- Measure adherence, not just output. Output variation is the symptom; process variation is the cause.
- Build the management system to support the work system. Supervisor Standard Work is not optional.

- Remember that the standard is the current best method, not the permanent best method. Humility about what you know today is the prerequisite for learning more tomorrow.

⚙️ The standard exists to be followed — and to be improved. These two imperatives are not in conflict. Follow the standard with discipline. Improve it with creativity. And when you improve it, make the improvement the new standard. That cycle, repeated over time, across every process in an organization, is what operational excellence actually looks like.

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