

Six Ideas to Improve Your Business Today

- 1) Workplace organization, cleaning and labeling** – With your staff, get rid of everything you don't need very often (put it in storage or recycle it). Everything that remains should be stuff used quite often. Label it and make sure there is room for it somewhere. Clean up the area, to make it shine, so that it looks like a brand new area (this gets the workers excited). Setup a process to put things away after use, and maintain the cleanliness and organization, so it doesn't go back to the mess it was before.
- 2) Customer Surveys** - send out a survey to your customers, and ask them how you can improve your products and services. Be open to input they receive, and gather the top 3 ideas for implementation.
- 3) Employee Brainstorming** - Gather your employees and “brainstorm” ways to improve the business. Your employees hear the complaints and deal with the inefficient processes, so listen to what they say. Make sure you ask them about risks of problems, not just those that have actually happened (employee turnover, close-call accidents, anticipated issues, mistakes that almost made it to the customer, etc.).
- 4) Remove backups** - Look for areas in your business processes where the work piles up or gets backed up (called “bottlenecks”). If you can improve the efficiency in that area, the results are often seen immediately with your customers.
- 5) Document tasks** - develop a standard approach for doing key activities and tasks. Write them down, so everyone knows how it should be done. If someone comes up with a better idea, update the steps. Provide as many photos and pictures as possible.
- 6) Cross-train employees** - train other employees to be able to do multiple tasks and skills (not the same as multi-tasking, which tends to be inefficient overall). This gives you a more flexible workforce, so in case you get overloaded in one area, or someone is out sick or on vacation, you aren't keeping the customer waiting, or providing poor service, or not responding to them at all.

