

Save Time, Learn Quickly, Be Lean

Kanban Course in 5 E-Mail

Module 5

How to sustain Kanban. Who does what?

Chapter 16

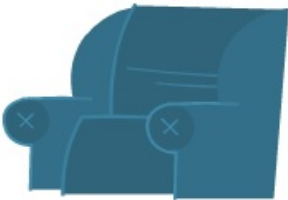
Who is accountable for? Who is accountable for?
Who is accountable for?

Who is accountable for?

4 times?

Yes!

It is not a typing mistake. This is the **question you have to answer** within **your team** to let the **Kanban works**.



Too many times I have seen **parts and materials sitting** on the floor **because nobody was accountable** for moving the materials from a **location A to B**.

Now let me reveal the second "mantra".

How does it work?

How does it work?

How does it work?

Here there is a sentence of Ohno.

Where there is no Standard, there can be no Kaizen

In other words, it is **better to draft Standard that no Standard at all.**

So,

all this said you have to **try some standard and improve it by following it.**

In the next chapters, I will treat the roles and the method I use to **set the accountability and the standard.**

Then, I will teach you **how to sustain the Kanban.**

Chapter 17

Kanban Roles and Responsibility

Let us start with an image of all the "actors" in a Kanban System.



Let us see actor by actor what **they usually do** in a "conventional" company and what they should do in a "Kanban System."

For sake of clarity I will treat the system for the **withdrawal Kanban type**. Keep in mind that **for the production Kanban what basically change is the Lead Time to have the material once the signal is given.**

1) The User



The user is the worker, the **person who do the job** on the shopfloor.

His/Her role in the Kanban System is to use the "material" with a clear understanding on how many the process should consume each shift/day/week.

If the user has a clear understanding of the quantity to use, **He/She has the information to give the signal if there is an "abnormal" consumption** for any reason

Then,

He/She has to **respect the use of the "signal" (KANBAN)** that the team has decided (Cards, Space, Electronic Signal).

Let me give you an example.

The user, after training, knows that the workstation where He/She works **should consume 50-70 bolts every shift.**

Moreover,

He / She knows that **everytime the box that contains the bolts is empty has to be located on a specific place on the rack.**

All this said,

when the consumption of the bolts is "abnormal", he/she has to speak with the waterspider to give the information.

Abnormal means both **extra consumption** or **low consumption**.

Here a **summary** with a **comparison** between a "**Conventional User**" and a "**Kanban System User**"

Conventional User	Kanban System User
I do not know how many bolts I need in 1 Shift.	I do know how many bolts I need in 1 Shift.
The others has to provide me the bolts. I do not care. It is not my job.	I have to help the others to provide me the bolts by giving them informations.
If I notice something wrong in the consumption I do not know what to do.	If I notice something wrong in the consumption I know what to do and the waterspider is my first contact.
I do not know what the Kanban is.	I know what means Kanban and I use it easily and regularly.

So,

the user:

- Has to be involved in the system
- Has to know the numbers
- Has to know how to communicate any abnormality.
- Has to know the Kanban to use

2) The Waterspider



The **waterspider** is a **KEY figure** of the **Lean Company** that want to implement a **Kanban System**.

WARNING!

Here there is the most important note.

Most of the company do not have the waterspider, and this is one of the biggest ROADBLOCK.

- Who has to do it?
- How long has to be involved in this process?

Because **it is not easy to change** and move skilled operators to this role **what companies normally do is ... NO WATERSPIDER.**

NO WATERSPIDER is the Killer!

Without Waterspider you cannot even think to create a Kanban System.

You have to TRY!

It is not forever!

TRY! TRY! TRY!

Here a **video on Youtube** that will help you to understand the **role and responsibility of the waterspider**.

<http://www.leanvlog.com/waterspider-perfectly-explained/>



So, the waterspider has to:

- Perform a **standard route to collect Kanban** (Cards, Boxes, Spaces etc.)
- On the **same standard route has to replenish** the racks with the materials collected from warehouse according to Kanban
- **Help the colleagues** because he is an expert
- **Register any information** from colleagues at shopfloor and bring **to the Planner (see later)**
- Bring both materials and informations

Here is very easy the comparison between a conventional way and the Kanban System.

Conventional = No Waterspider

Kanban System = Yes Waterspider

3) The Planner



The **planner** has to buy materials to allow the **production flow** without any **stock-out** and with the **inventory under control**.

What typically happens is that the planner is disconnected from the **shopfloor** and tend to forecast the consumption by systems as **ORACLE** or **SAP** or others.

The reality is that **because of misalignment** of the systems or **not real time updating** or **simply typing mistake**, it is **very hard for the planner to meet the goal**.

Moreover, when **some problem occurs**, **planner blame shopfloor people** and **shopfloor people blame the planner**.

Is not it?

In the Kanban System, the **Planner is connected with shopfloor by waterspider more than once a day**.

The **Computer System is important for a long term vision and forecast**, but the **short term is great when managed by people** that are involved in the process.

Let me give an example.

If for any reason there is an **abnormal consumption of files (i.e. 150 rather than 70)** the user can detect this immediately and communicate with the waterspider.

In the same day, the **waterspider communicate with the Planner**, and an **immediate reaction** and **investigation** are possible.

How many days are normally needed to have a proper reaction if we rely on the computer systems?

By the Kanban System is possible to use immediately one of the most powerful tools of the Lean Manufacturing ... the **5 Why's analysis**.

The consumption was expected to be 70 files, but we experienced 150 files ... why?

Remember!

It is always the process under investigation never the person!

4) The supplier



The **supplier is part of the story.**

Period.

We cannot realize a Kanban System if we have not a positive relation with the supplier.

- Is the **supplier aware** of the **Kanban System**?
- How the **planner communicate with him/her**?
- In other words which are **the signal between the Planner and Supplier**?

Mostly, the electronic signal is used between planner and supplier, but in the most advanced company the signal is a physical one (i.e. Cards, Boxes, etc.)

Could appear counterintuitive

From my perspective when you have a **"hard signal"** the information is there without **any chance to be misunderstood.**

So,

how to involve the supplier?

Here how I did.

Firstly I did my homework.

- How many of **#SKU3245** I suppose to **consume in the year, quarter, month, week?**
- There is any **significant variation in the year?**
- Is the **supplier historically reliable?**

Once I finished my homework, I **picked up the phone**, and I called the supplier by **offering** him/her a **better way to work together**.

The **better way** was based on:

- Clear Numbers both side
- Trust
- Leveling of the demand
- Clear information flow (read signal read KANBAN)

We made a deal ... we started.

That is it!

Try!

5) Senior Leader & CI Leader



Senior Leader and **Continuous Improvement Leader** play an **instrumental** role in this implementation.

The **Continuous Improvement Leader** has to **teach and lead** the team **challenging status quo, fears to implement.**

The **Senior Leader** has to **help** the Continuous Improvement Leader if the **resistance is too great** and to **reinforce the commitment** and the engagement on a **regular base.**

One of the ways I suggest to achieve the **success** is to use the **boards of the Daily Morning Meeting** to try the Kanban in a limited area, discuss the problems and the solutions in a team, track the KPI's and tell the Senior Leader how the project is going.

To **understand the way I love to use the board** and create engagement, I suggest to see the **following video.**

<http://www.leanvlog.com/the-5-main-steps-of-the-lean-management/>

6) The most important symbol



This is the **most important symbol** of the KANBAN SYSTEM.

This symbol to me is the **reminder that the job is never done!**

Demand change, suppliers change, products change ...

Hence, you have **continuously to refine numbers, train people, meet the team at the board.**

The **contact between the elements of a Kanban System** has to be **regular** and always **focused** on **solving problems** and **optimize the process.**

I read somewhere that **we have the culture of making a model and freeze it** up to a great failure of the system.

The approach is changed and described in the book "The Lean Startup".

- Create a model
- Test the model
- Change the model the fastest as possible based on the results obtained.

The faster is the cycle, the better will work the model in a long a never ending term.

And now let me pass the word to Luis, our logistic expert. Do not hesitate to visit his Spanish blog www.excelean.com

Chapter 18

FAQ on Kanban Roles and Responsibility

Question n° 1 - Who is responsible for updating Kanban Circles?



There is no a single position responsible, every company should decide, but the general idea is that this person will be in charge to **verify the stock** levels, to check **how often daily parts are replenished**, which parts are replaced few days a week, etc.

May be the person in charge of replenishment, the planner or any **similar role** in the company.

But is quite important that **this person knows how to analyze the trend**, to define **how frequency we should update kanban**, and especially this person must be a person that **speak very frequently with the replenishers in the plant**.

We **don't need a person that just check numbers**, this can be done by a computer, but **must be a person in contact with the people** that execute the work, to realize the work involved in the replenishment process, as this is also muda.

Question n° 2 - How ensure that Kanban initiative will keep on going?

GOOD DAY

Well, the **results show Kanban works.**

If we can work with **no stock shortages**, and **reduce the inventory level**, we will **demonstrate everybody Kanban works**, and we can use it forever.

However, there is a **hidden enemy**, and this comes **when the machines are stopped.**

Some production managers or even financial managers have a **“machine stop allergy”** because they think this is a waste.

However what is a waste, is to produce to increase stock, this **reduces the cash flow**, and only let us **keep more pallets in racks.**

So **get a remedy against that “allergy,”** to prevent they sabotage the kanban, **show them that we must not produce more**, we must produce just what customer demands, no more no less.

Customers pay just for parts they order, not for our stock level.

Question n° 3 - Role and Responsibility in the Kanban System?

There are **at least three**:

1° The leader,

the person that must move the kanban system and keep on working all time.

Also, this person is the **trainer for employees**, the person that **resolve questions, issues and so on**, and the person that **ensure everyone**, from top management to employees **that Kanban works and is a benefit for everybody**.

2° The runner,

the person **in charge to replenish kanban immediately**.

It **doesn't make sense have kanban colored cards** to replenish parts **if the person in charge of replenishment is working in something else and don't replenish on time**.

So the **best practice** is to have **just one person in charge to replenish ALL kanban and create a replenishment circuit** to check all working areas every few minutes to ensure **replenishment on time**.

This person will give us some ideas to keep parts as close as possible to the kanban areas to reduce the circuit's length.

3° The planner.

This **person is the key to define properly the quantities in Kanban** and is the **responsible for updating them when need**.

If also as explained above, **he speaks daily with the runner**, will be sure that have the **right quantity of the kanban cards to reduce the runner process**.

Conclusions

As you see **Kanban is not complex**, is just a question to **analyze correctly and start working with few parts**, later on, you will **add more as soon people learn how to work with this new process**.

In the end, we will have all **high turn parts in Kanban**.

Chapter 19

Conclusions

Let me reveal a secret.

This **course** was made with the **pure scope of helping you** to implement a **successful Kanban System**.

These PDFs were written by people who did it in reality and not only reading books.

We know **how is difficult to change the status quo**, but **we are very energized when you reach double digit results** by doing something that was never achieved before.

Hence, do not hesitate to contact us on

info.leanlab@gmail.com

for any questions and **follow us on our websites** to be **updated** and **download other materials** we will release in the future.

We will appreciate if you **would share with us your experience** in **Kanban System Implementation after reading this course**.

Bye!