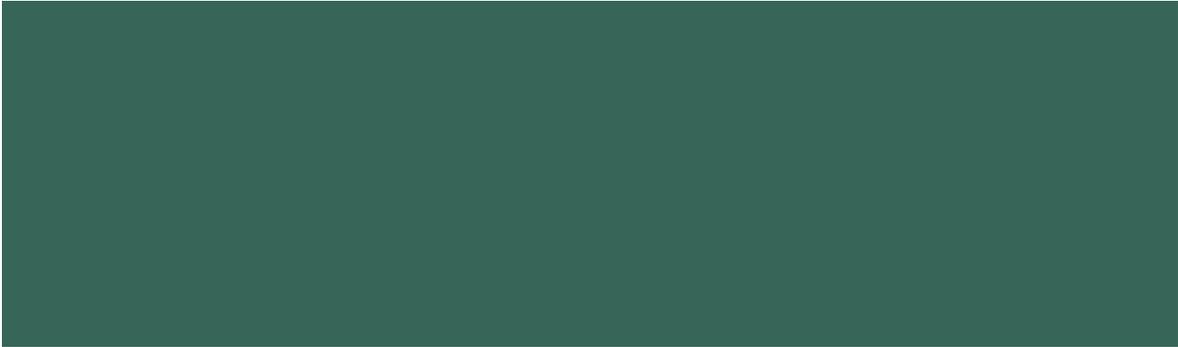# USING LEAN PRINCIPLES TO STREAMLINE HIRING

VIRGINIA GLEASON
CITY OF SEATTLE IT GOVERNANCE ADVISOR

WHY STREAMLINE YOUR HIRING PROCESS?

- It is a very competitive hiring market
- The national unemployment rate is 5%
- The Seattle area unemployment rate is 3%
- For relatively unskilled jobs, the average timetable from first interview to job offer is 5 – 10 days
- For higher skilled positions average hiring times have reduced from 2 months to 2 – 3 weeks
- The expectations of the key hiring pool has changed, especially as it relates to timing and communication

WHO REPRESENTS THESE GENERATIONAL GROUPS?

Baby Boomers

**Influenced by:** Vietnam War, Civil Rights, Cold War, NASA and space travel, the Beatles

Gen Xers

Influenced by: Watergate, Y2K, End of Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, PCs, MTV, video games

Millennials

Influenced by: iPods, cell phones, 9/11 terrorist attacks, social media, reality TV, globalization, selfies, multiculturalism, Harry Potter, tattoos

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THE GROUP WE NEED TO ACCOMMODATE – MILLENNIALS
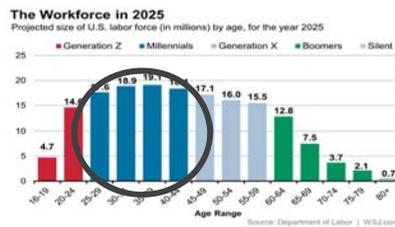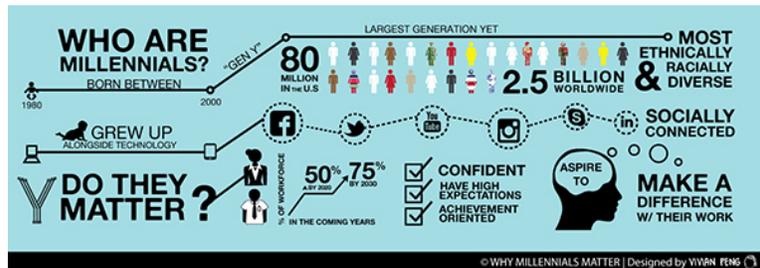
## WHY ALL THE FOCUS ON MILLENNIALS AND HIRING?

- Because of the numbers – they dominate the hiring pool

- In less than 10 years, they'll make up 75% of the workforce

- This group includes more than 80 million Americans who are potential hires – and more than half of the employees in the world

THEY GREW UP WITH DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND HAVE DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS ABOUT ON-DEMAND SERVICES

AND THEY AREN'T USED TO WAITING FOR RESULTS
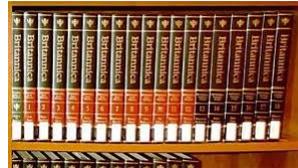
HOW ARE THE MILLENNIALS DIFFERENT?

- They grew up with technology – they are "digital natives" and expect fast turnaround
  - Email
  - Texting
  - Cell phones
  - Digital cameras
- They embrace new ideas and technology
- They expect to be quickly connected to people and information
- They learn from many different methods and tools
- They avoid rigid schedules

TO WIN THE RACE, WE NEED TO MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE.

We're not just competing with other municipalities for public safety talent

Women's LE Job Fair

We're competing with non LE professions and the private sector who have easier hiring processes and fewer regulatory hiring requirements

SU Job Fair

MILLENNIAL CHARACTERISTICS RELEVANT TO PUBLIC SAFETY:

- They want their work to make a difference
- They want to be part of something bigger than themselves
- They need regular feedback – not just during training, but throughout their careers
- They seek leadership and mentorship
- They adapt well to new technology

HOW TO GET THE MILLENNIALS

- **Harvest ones that were planted for public service:**
  - Explorers
  - Citizen's academy
  - Criminal Justice Students
  - Youth programs
  - Boy Scouts
  - Girl Scouts
  - AmeriCorps

- **Steal millennials from other professions:**
  - 60% have changed jobs 1-4 times in the past 5 years.
  - Find jobs where millennials are unsatisfied such as:
    - Teaching
    - Nursing
    - Merchandising
    - Security guard
    - Truck driver
    - Maintenance supervisor
    - Airlines

LOOK FOR COMPANIES OR INDUSTRIES THAT ARE DOWNSIZING

PUGET SOUND BUSINESS JOURNAL

Microsoft cuts 1,850 jobs, takes nearly $1B charge related to smartphone business

The Seattle Times
Boeing & Aerospace | Business | Economy

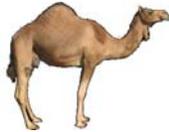**Boeing plans hundreds of layoffs in local IT unit**

Nordstrom layoffs respond to sagging profits, rising competition

PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL

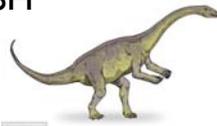**Oregon fallout: Intel cuts 784 jobs in Hillsboro and Aloha**

WHY CHANGE?

ADAPT

OR PERISH

HOW CAN WE ADAPT TO ADDRESS THIS CHANGE IN THE HIRING LANDSCAPE?

- Be responsive
- Be creative
- Be fast
- Focus on the behaviors that are compatible with public safety and the new hiring pool
- Determine which strengths are compatible with the jobs – and go <u>find</u> those people

WHY CAN'T WE ALWAYS GET THE APPLICANTS WE WANT?

- Some things cannot be changed about the job:
    - The work is hard
    - The hours are unpredictable
    - The work is not always appreciated
    - Statutory requirements limit the applicant pool
    - Background requirements limit the applicant pool
- Some things can be changed – and this is where we should focus:
    - Streamlined process
    - Applicable hiring and backgrounding criteria

WE WANT TO HIRE THESE PEOPLE

BUT IF ALL THE GOOD CANDIDATES ARE GONE, WE WILL GET THIS:
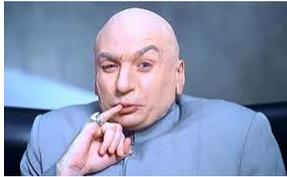
YOUR ODDS OF GETTING THE RIGHT CANDIDATES ARE INCREASED IF YOUR PROCESS IS SWIFT AND LEAN

LEAN PRINCIPLES:

Remove waste
- Eliminate duplicate processes
- Eliminate steps that are meaningless (create no value)
- Eliminate errors

Add value
- Increase communication and visibility
- Help a system work and flow better
- Make better use of employee skills

Optimize the whole process
Look at hiring as an integrated system with an organized flow.

APPLYING THE LEAN PROCESS TO HIRING

- Strive for continuous improvement
- Go to the source – ask the people who do the work
- Respect for people
- Teamwork
- Optimize the whole
- Challenge the process
- Create systems that are consistent, timely and repeatable

ISN'T LEAN JUST FOR MANUFACTURING?

Ford & Toyota motor assembly lines

Boeing airplane assembly

CAN IT WORK IN GOVERNMENT?

"Lean for government is organizational transformation focused on creating value for clients, maximizing flow in processes, providing opportunities for employees to develop problem solving skills and finding creative and innovative solutions to serve citizens."*

- Lean is solutions by people, for people.

*France Bergeron, Lean Consultant and co-author of the Lean for Government Champion's Handbook

LEAN CAN ALSO BE APPLIED SUCCESSFUL IN GOVERNMENT – SOME EXAMPLES:

COLORADO Department of Transportation

Hiring process reduced from over 180 to 64 days

NYC HEALTH+ HOSPITALS

Reduced ER wait time
Reduced hospital stay time
Created more efficient supply room

King County

- Improved psychiatric observation of jail inmates.
- Improved ballot counting process: reduced time, less cost, no loss of accuracy

COWLITZ COUNTY WASHINGTON

Reduced processing time for Real Estate Excise Tax affidavits

AREAS RIPE FOR STREAMLINING

- Planning
- Recruiting
- Application process
- Testing content and timing
- Scheduling oral boards
- Completing the PHS
- Backgrounding

- Routing paperwork
- Getting approvals
- Onboarding
- Planning for academy or other required training
- Ordering equipment
- Planning for probationary training

CHALLENGE YOUR EXISTING PROCESS – STEP BY STEP

- Get information on the process from the <u>best</u> source
  - The people who **actually do the work**
  - Hands-on workers
  - Supervisors
  - Occasional helpers
  - People who have been through the process
 - Partners

WASTE – ELIMINATE IF POSSIBLE

1. **Transport** – moving people, products and information
2. **Inventory excess** – storing parts, equipment or documentation before its needed
3. **Waiting** – for documents, instructions, equipment, reports
4. **Overproduction** – making more than can be used in this process or cycle
5. **Over processing** – requiring higher standards or more approvals than are necessary
6. **Defects** – having to rework process, incorrect documentation
7. **Not utilizing talent** – not using skilled workers who are available or giving work to people without necessary training, information or tools

MAPPING – LOOK FOR WASTE

- Map your <u>current</u> process
- Include every person who touches the process – either electronically or physically
- Do a timeline of every step
- Look for processes that cause delay
- Look for bottlenecks

- Map your desired <u>future</u> process
  - Reduce lead time to get authorization to hire
  - Reduce the time to process applicants
  - Reduce paperwork to process applicants
  - Improve hiring manager experience
  - Improve applicant experience
  - Provide transparency and information flow to all participants

SAMPLE CURRENT STATE MAP

- Map the flow of applicants – including paper and communication. "Be the document or process"

- Include every step

- Evaluate each step – does this add value?

- Mark the time between steps
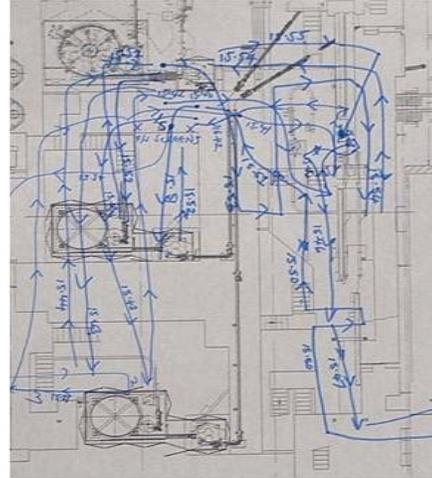

REVIEW THE MAP

- Is every step necessary?

- If it is not necessary (e.g., legally required), does it add value to the process? Can it be removed?

- Is there a bottleneck? Is it a person or a process?

- Does it help identify an area of delay?

- Brainstorm ideas on how to address these areas.

- Make sure people who actually do the process are included in the mapping and review!

EVALUATE <u>EVERY</u> STEP OF YOUR PROCESS AND ASK:

- How could this step be better?
  - Ask the right people – the "hands-on" people in your department
  - Ask successful applicants what worked or didn't work in the process
  - Contact applicants who withdraw or drop out – why?
  - Ask new hires
  - Ask other departments
  - Ask panelists

SAMPLE FUTURE STATE MAP

- Create your ideal future state
- Be realistic, but push the boundaries
- Focus on where you can add value – even if it has to be done incrementally
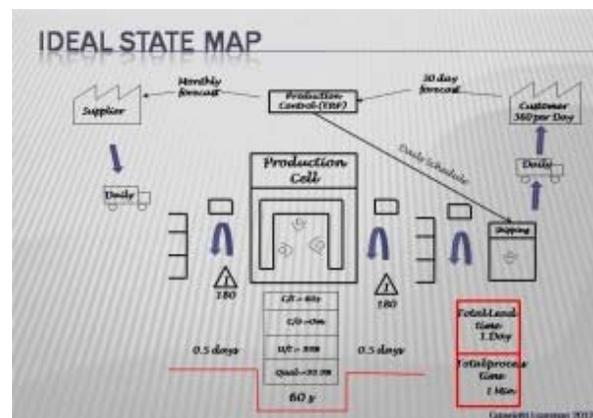
ARE YOU OVER-PROCESSING?

- Good grades
- Good job history
- Good driver
- Athletic and fit
- No crimes committed
- No debt
- No visible tattoos
- No unhappy exes
- No temper
- Good judgment
- Plays well with others

This list may be too limiting. We could only find one person that currently meets these criteria.

But, not available, not a US Resident.

USING TECHNOLOGY IN HIRING

GO MOBILE

- Go mobile if possible – in every process used by an applicant.
- Why? In 2016 65% of all digital media time is on mobile – only 35% on the desktop.
- Try to make your hiring and recruiting pages and application page able to be read and accessed by mobile devices.

COMMUNICATE

- Text/email applicants often to keep them informed of status.

UPDATE YOUR WEBSITE!

- Is it up to date?
- Is new content added regularly?
- If it allows for questions, are questions answered in a timely manner?

ALLOW FOR ELECTRONIC FORMS

- Don't require long forms to be filled out by hand
- Don't ask for meaningless information
- Pre-populate information if possible

BE CONSISTENT IN WHAT YOU LOOK FOR IN YOUR PROCESS

- Choose the competencies you want for the job and apply them consistently:
  - Recruit for them
  - Test for them
  - Background for them
  - Train for them
  - Use them for probationary evaluations
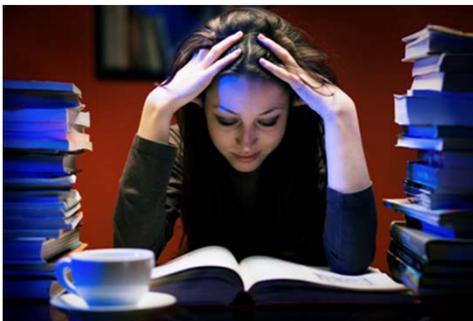 - Use them for regular performance evaluations

DON'T RECRUIT FOR THIS:

AND THEN TEST AND BACKGROUND FOR THIS:

AND THEN ASK FOR THIS IN YOUR PROBATIONARY PROGRAM

TESTING

- Does your testing match the competencies you want?

- Do you know what you want from your oral boards?

- Have you trained your panelists about those competencies?

- Are these competencies compatible with whatever training academy or other training the employee must pass?

BACKGROUNDING

- Are you only asking for information relevant to the job requirements?
- Are you asking for information that isn't used?
- Are your disqualifiers appropriate for the competencies you want?
- Are you missing important information that you have to collect later?
- Are you using technology to help eliminate errors or duplication in your information?
- Are you routing materials through approval or review processes that don't add value?

VISUAL MONITORING

- Have a visual tool that all stakeholders can use to help keep your process on track
- Use the format that works for your organization
  - Handwritten
  - Post-its
  - Computer generated chart (print out and post)
- **<u>Keep it current!</u>**
- Post it in plain sight, ideally near where the work is done
- It should be understandable at a glance
- Consider allowing for input/comments/ideas written or posted on the chart

VISUAL TOOLS

RESOURCES

- Municipal Resource Service Center mrsc.org
- State of Washington Auditor's office
  - Lean Academy
  - Online resources
- State of Michigan
  - Michiganlean.org

- King County
  - Performance, Strategy & Budget Department
- Lean for Government
  - Leanforgovernment.com
  - Leangovcenter.com
- Washington State Employment Security Department

Using Lean Principles to Streamline Hiring
Virginia Gleason
City of Seattle IT Governance Advisor
September 2016

Why streamline your hiring process?
We are in a very competitive hiring market; streamlining and speeding up your process while keeping quality will improve your hiring process.
- The national unemployment rate is 5%
- The Seattle area unemployment rate is 3%
- Other employers are speeding up their hiring processes and hiring applicants quickly.
- For relatively unskilled jobs, the average timetable from first interview to job offer is 5 – 10 days.
- For higher skilled positions average hiring times have reduced from two months to two weeks.
- The expectations of the target hiring pool have changed, especially as it relates to timing and communication.
- A slow hiring processes will often be less successful than a speedy hiring process because many of the good applicants have accepted other jobs.

Where should we look for applicants?
Employers need to accommodate the reality of the available hiring pool – this means courting and accommodating the millennial generation.
- Why all the focus on millennials and hiring? It's simple. It's because of the numbers. Millennials dominate the hiring pool and will for some time.
- In less than 10 years, they'll make up 75% of the workforce.
- This group includes more than 80 million Americans who are potential hires – and more than half of the employees in the world.

How are Millennials different?
Millennials grew up with different experiences and have different expectations about employment, communication and on-demand services.
- They aren't used to waiting for results.
- They grew up with technology – they are "digital natives" and expect fast turnaround. They have lived most of their lives with email, texting, cell phones, digital cameras, online purchasing, online banking.
- They embrace new ideas and technology.
- They expect to be quickly connected to people and information.
- They learn from many different methods and tools.
- They often avoid rigid schedules.

To be successful in hiring, employers need to adapt their processes.
- It's not an employer's market. To win the race for applicants, we need to meet the applicants where they are.

- We're not just competing with other municipalities for public safety talent.
- We're competing with non-public safety professions and the private sector who have easier hiring processes and fewer regulatory hiring requirements.
- There are pockets of distrust and/or lack of enthusiasm about public safety careers.

There is hope and opportunity.
There are many millennial characteristics applicable in public safety careers.
- They want their work to make a difference.
- They want to be part of something bigger than themselves.
- They need and accept regular feedback – not just during training, but throughout their careers.
- They seek leadership and mentorship.
- They adapt well to new technology.

Some ideas for widening the applicant pool:
- Recruit for those who have engaged in programs focused on public service:
    - Explorers
    - Citizen's academy
    - Criminal Justice Students
    - Volunteer EMTs and Firefighters
    - Search and rescue
    - Youth programs
    - Boy Scouts
    - Girl Scouts
    - AmeriCorps
    - Volunteer programs

- Recruit from other professions where there is a reported dissatisfaction or uncertainty of its future. Millennials are open to changing jobs. Up to 60% have changed jobs one to four times in the past five years. Jobs that have a reported high rate of dissatisfaction:
    - Teaching
    - Nursing
    - Merchandising
    - Security guard
    - Truck driver
    - Maintenance supervisor
    - Airline support

- Proactively approach companies who report impending layoffs and ask if they will circulate your hiring and recruiting information internally at their company. Lists of upcoming layoffs in Washington are listed at the Washington State Employment Security Department website: https://esd.wa.gov/about-employees/WARN. You can sign up for their listserv. In 2016 the following Washington and Oregon companies have given notice that they intend to lay off employees very soon:
    - Boeing

- o Microsoft
- o Intel
- o Nordstrom
- o Providence Health Care
- o Rural/Metro Ambulance
- o Olympic Panel Products
- o Jorgenson Forge
- o Spectrum Glass Company
- o CRF Frozen Foods
- o Hanford
- o Cascade Valley Hospital
- o Xerox
- o Alcoa Intalco

How can we adapt to address this change in the hiring landscape?
- Be responsive
- Be creative
- Be fast
- Focus on the behaviors that are compatible with public safety and the new hiring pool
- Determine which strengths are compatible with the jobs – and go find those people

Use lean principles and practices to streamline, improve and speed up your hiring process
Understanding that we have a new hiring landscape with a particular applicant pool, the odds of getting the right candidates are increased if your process is swift, focused on this population and producing quality results. The lean goals:
- Remove waste
  - o Eliminate duplicate processes
  - o Eliminate steps that are meaningless (create no value to the process)
  - o Eliminate errors
  - o Reduce avoidable delays
- Add value
  - o Increase communication and feedback to the candidates and internally
  - o Make better use of employee skills and knowledge
  - o Help a system flow better
  - o Organize information to be visible to all stakeholders
- Optimize the whole process, not just the pieces

Lean process principles:
- Always strive for continuous improvement
- Go to the source – ask the people who do the work
- Respect for people
- Teamwork
- Optimize the whole
- Challenge existing processes

- Create systems that are consistent, timely and repeatable

Can lean process improvements work for government?
Lean process principles started in manufacturing, but are applicable to government work flow processes.

> "Lean for government is organizational transformation focused on creating value for clients, maximizing flow in processes, providing opportunities for employees to develop problem solving skills and finding creative and innovative solutions to serve citizens."

> *France Bergeron, Lean Consultant and co-author of the Lean for Government Champion's Handbook: Launching and ensuring success for your Lean for government project.*

Areas of the hiring process that should be evaluated for streamlining:
- Planning
- Recruiting
- Application process (submission, review)
- Testing content and timing
- Scheduling oral boards
- Dealing with non-local candidates
- Completing the Personal History Statement
- Backgrounding
- Routing paperwork
- Getting approvals
- Onboarding
- Planning for academy or other required training
- Ordering equipment
- Probationary training

Challenge the process:
Examine your existing process – step by step. Get information on the process from the best sources:
- The people who **actually do the work**
- Hands on workers
- Supervisors
- Occasional helpers
- People who have been through the process
- Partners

What is waste?
- Transport – moving people, products and information
- Inventory excess – storing parts, equipment or documentation before its needed
- Waiting – for documents, instructions, equipment, reports
- Overproduction – making more than can be used in this process or cycle
- Over processing – requiring higher standards or more approvals than are necessary

- Defects – having to rework process, incorrect documentation
- Not utilizing talent – not using skilled workers who are available or giving work to people without necessary training, information or tools

Start by mapping your current process
- Include every person who touches the process – either electronically or physically
- Do a timeline of every step
- Mark the time between steps

Look at the map and evaluate your current process:
- Look for processes that cause delay
- Look for bottlenecks
- Evaluate each step – does this add value? If not, can it be eliminated?
- Ask the right people to contribute – the "hands on" people in your department
- Ask successful applicants what worked or didn't work in the process
- Contact applicants who withdraw or drop out and ask why
- Ask new hires
- Ask other departments
- Ask panelists

Map your desired future process
- Reduce lead time to get authorization to hire
- Reduce the time to process applicants
- Reduce paperwork to process applicants
- Improve hiring manager experience
- Improve applicant experience
- Provide transparency and information flow to all participants

Review the maps and see how to get from current state to desired future state:
- Is every step necessary?
- If it is not necessary (e.g., legally required), does it add value to the process? Can it be removed?
- Is there a bottleneck? Is it a person or a process?
- Brainstorm ideas on how to address these areas.
- Make sure people who actually do the process are included in the mapping and the review!

Using technology to streamline and improve the hiring process:
- Go mobile!
    - Go mobile if possible – in every process used by an applicant.
    - Why? In 2016 65% of all digital media time is on mobile – only 35% on the desktop.
    - Try to make your hiring and recruiting pages and application page able to be read and accessed by mobile devices.
- Communicate - text/email applicants often to keep them informed of status.
- Are you using technology to help eliminate errors or duplication in your information?

- Are you pre-populating forms if possible?
- Update your recruiting and hiring website
    - Is it up to date?
    - Is new content added regularly?
    - If it allows for questions, are questions answered in a timely manner?

Be consistent in what you look for in your hiring process.
Choose the competencies you want for the job and then apply them consistently.
- Recruit for them
- Test for them
- Background for them
- Train for them
- Use them for probationary evaluations
- Use them for regular performance evaluations

Testing
- Does your testing match the competencies you want?
- Have you trained your panelists about those competencies?
- Are these competencies compatible with whatever training academy or other training the employee must pass?

Backgrounding
- Are you only asking for information relevant to the requirements for the job and that address the competencies?
- Are you asking for information that isn't used or related to the competencies?
- Are your disqualifiers appropriate for the competencies you want?
- Are you missing important information that you have to collect later?
- Are you routing materials through approval or review processes that don't add value?

Visualize your work:
Use a visual tool to monitor and control the processes.
- It can be a hand written chart, a chart with post its, or a software program to track process steps. If it is software, print out the chart and post.
- Post it in plain sight, ideally near the work area where the work is done
- Frequently updated
- Can be understood at a glance
- There are many sample templates available

Resources for lean process improvement information:
Municipal Resource Service Center
State of Washington Auditor's office
    Lean Academy, http://www.sao.wa.gov/local/Pages/LeanAcademy.aspx
    Online resources, http://www.sao.wa.gov/local/Pages/Training.aspx
State of Michigan
    Michiganlean.org
King County

Performance, Strategy & Budget Department
http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/lean.aspx
Lean for Government
Leanforgovernment.com
Leangovcenter.com
Lean Enterprise Institute http://www.lean.org/

Information on impending layoffs in Washington State:
Washington State Employment Security Department
https://esd.wa.gov/about-employees/WARN

Virginia Gleason

Virginia Gleason is the Governance Advisor for the City of Seattle IT Department. Previously she was the Chief Strategic Advisor for the Seattle Police Department, and the Manager of the Professional Standards Division of the King County Sheriff's Office. She has managed Human Resources, Accreditation, Manual Revision, Background and Internal Investigation Units. Prior to working at the King County Sheriff's Office, Virginia was a lawyer in private and public practice. She worked as a lawyer with the Seattle firm Riddell Williams, served as a King County Senior Prosecuting Attorney, Senior Counsel at the Port of Seattle, and as the Administrative Manager of the Port of Seattle Police Department.

Virginia earned her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Oregon School of Law and her Bachelor's degree from the University of Washington. She is an active member of the Washington State Bar and licensed to practice in Washington.

Virginia is an Adjunct Professor in the Criminal Justice Department at Seattle University, and coordinates legal training for the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Legal Advisor Committee.