

# HOW '5S' ORGANIZING BOOSTS MONEY, TIME, AND PATIENT OUTCOMES

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My Drawer



## WHAT IS '5S'?

### THE CORE OF "LEAN" PHILOSOPHY

"Lean" concepts have revolutionized the industrial world. Originating in Japan, and popularized by Toyota, Lean ideas are credited with substantial increases in productivity and efficiency across all types of enterprises. The primary principles of Lean thinking are the elimination of wasted time and resources through standardization of processes and the involvement of all employees in improving those processes. At the core of the Lean philosophy is a technique for transforming the workplace known as "5S."

Named after the five phases that define the process — Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain — 5S is a straightforward and cost-effective way to bring organization and standardization to work environments that rely on precision, speed, and safety to achieve optimum results. Although it began as a manufacturing philosophy, it's easy to understand why healthcare practices have increasingly begun adopting 5S methodology to improve their own efficiency, safety, and patient satisfaction.



### WHAT, WHEN, AND WHERE

At heart, the 5S organization process is about consistently providing what is needed, when it is needed, and where it is needed for all of your personnel. When done correctly and using the right tools, 5S is low-cost and technologically undemanding, meaning that every employee — from administrator to lead clinician — can participate in its implementation and maintenance, regardless of their experience or technical knowledge.

## THE STEPS OF 5S



### **SORT**

Separate equipment items by their frequency of use and categories of use. Discard broken, outdated, or unused items.

### **SET IN ORDER (OR STRAIGHTEN)**

Arrange items in the most efficient and accessible way for your workplace, depending on your process flows.

### **SHINE (OR SCRUB)**

Clean the work area and make it simple to keep clean in the future.

### **STANDARDIZE**

Ensure consistency by applying your specific organization design throughout the workplace and giving employees the tools to maintain the sort, set in order, and shine outcomes.

### **SUSTAIN**

Regularly evaluate and audit the outcomes from the first four phases and adjust or add tools as needed to maintain the organization program.

## HOW IS 5S TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE PRACTICES?

### FROM MANUFACTURING TO HEALTHCARE

Although 5S started in manufacturing, its goals dovetail closely with the challenges and objectives of modern healthcare practices. Healthcare providers at all levels are under extraordinary pressure to reduce costs while simultaneously improving patient service, safety, and satisfaction. This combination is not easy to achieve, but the implementation of 5S concepts shows significant promise in all of those areas.

### EFFICIENCY AND COST SAVINGS

A well-organized and standardized healthcare practice can yield very real efficiency improvements and cost savings. These gains include significant reductions in work setup and process times, decreases in costs related to inventory and inventory management, and increases in availability of physical space.

A 2005 study found that, after implementing 5S practices, one endoscopy unit in a community hospital was able to convert a storage room into a staff room; save \$8,000 on linens, suture supplies, and other inventory; decrease their on-hand inventory by two-thirds; and reduce cycle time by 17 minutes.<sup>1</sup>

In another study, an operating room at a Seattle medical center reduced setup times for minimally invasive spine surgery by 37% and estimated that potential annual cost savings for the institution after 5S implementation could total \$2.8 million.<sup>2</sup>

### SAFETY

Every phase of the 5S process has benefits for the safety of your practice's patients and employees. Whether it's Sorting out broken or outdated supplies, improving ergonomics by Setting in Order, increasing cleanliness through the Shine stage, optimizing equipment accessibility and reducing search times through Standardization, or maintaining all of these oversight benefits in the Sustain phase, 5S can have meaningful safety outcomes.

One assessment in 2009 found that nurses using 5S to manage supply carts were better able to recognize safety and quality issues because the carts were identically organized and kept clean.<sup>3</sup> Another study found safety improvements from 5S because redesigned storage areas allowed staff to easily see and identify out-of-date products.<sup>4</sup>

### PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Improving the patient experience is another high-level healthcare objective for which 5S presents significant benefits. Many of the improved efficiency and safety outcomes for staff translate into shorter patient wait times, better perceptions of cleanliness and organization, and increased face-to-face time between providers and patients.

After 5S techniques were implemented in a surgical clinic at Seattle Children's Hospital, the clinic reported a 30% increase in face-to-face provider-patient time, as well as patient satisfaction survey scores that improved and were sustained over the course of a year.<sup>5</sup>

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**IN A SURGICAL CLINIC AT SEATTLE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, THE CLINIC REPORTED A 30% INCREASE IN FACE-TO-FACE PROVIDER-PATIENT TIME AFTER 5S TECHNIQUES WERE IMPLEMENTED**

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1 Laing, K., & Baumgartner, K. (2005). Implementing "Lean" principles to improve the efficiency of the endoscopy department of a community hospital. *Gastroenterology Nursing*, 28, 201-215.  
2 Farrokhi, F.R., Gunther, M., Williams, B., & Blackmore, C.C. (2015). Application of lean methodology for improved quality and efficiency in operating room instrument availability. *Journal for Healthcare Quality*, 37, 277-286.  
3 Kim, C.S., Spahlinger, D.A., Kin, J.M., & Coffey, R.J. (2009). Implementation of lean thinking: One health system's journey. *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, 35, 406-415.  
4 Ikuma, L. H. & Nahmens, I. (2014). Making safety an integral part of 5S in Healthcare. *Work*, 47, 243-251.  
5 Waldhausen, J.H.T., Avansino, J.R., Libby, A., & Sawin R.S. (2010). Application of lean methods improves surgical clinic experience. *Journal of Pediatric Surgery*, 45, 1420-1425.



## HOW DO I GET STARTED WITH 5S AT MY PRACTICE?

One of the great advantages of applying 5S to your healthcare practice is that it can be accomplished effectively and deliver impressive results without a huge financial investment. The keys are commitment and participation by all levels of your staff and the use of well-designed tools that make the process simple to implement and maintain.

### **SORT**

Healthcare offices stock an enormous array of supplies and implements. During the Sort phase, the goal is to clear out all items that are unnecessary in a given workspace, then categorize what remains. When sorting medical supplies and equipment, consider grouping them by how frequently they are used in your office space. You can also group supplies by use category so that items often used in tandem with each other are kept close together.

### **SET IN ORDER**

Now that you've sorted and grouped your supplies and equipment, it's time to thoughtfully organize and store them to match your office's workflow. This organization should be applied in both your practice areas and storage spaces. Make frequently used items more easily accessible and make it easy to gather items in the same use category, such as IV products or wound care supplies.

**IMPORTANT:** Don't just organize by drawer or cabinet. Get more specific. Every inventory item or piece of equipment should have a designated slot that is easily visible, appropriately sized, and clearly labeled. This not only encourages consistent maintenance of the organizational system, but also makes it immediately clear when a piece of equipment is missing or a supply is running low.

### **SHINE**

Cleanliness is obviously important in all parts of a healthcare practice. But this phase doesn't just include mopping and scrubbing. In the Shine phase, you should also take note of and remedy any work environment issues – poor or broken lighting, old or outdated labeling or notices, broken equipment, etc. The resulting workspaces – whether a patient room or “behind the scenes” – should be clean and free of clutter, with all supplies easily visible and accessible.

### **STANDARDIZE**

This is where the 5S magic really happens! In the Standardize phase, you create the conditions that make it easy for your staff to learn and maintain the benefits of 5S for your practice. The key to standardization is that different workspaces with the same core function in your practice look the same. This applies whether those workspaces are separated by a hallway, on opposite sides of town, or on mobile carts that move throughout your office.

Custom-designed organizing tools that can be replicated for all your workspaces or locations make this a breeze. The best designs allow for clear visibility of products with easy labeling. Color-coding of product families is also highly effective. When you standardize your organizing across locations, you make it easy for even new and rotating employees to find what they need without bothering others for help.

### **SUSTAIN**

Keep it going. Once you've got your organizing systems in place, use checklists and visual cues to help staff maintain discipline. Well-designed organizers help create the sense of “a place for everything and everything in its place,” making it easy for every employee to stick to the plan.



## KICK-START YOUR 5S RESULTS WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS

Custom acrylic organizers from Organize My Drawer are a simple and easy way to bring the benefits of 5S to any medical practice. Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain with premium quality, crystal-clear organizing trays and dividers that are designed by you to be a perfect fit for your unique workspaces, processes, and supplies.

- Simple to measure, design, and install.
- Delivered to your practice fully assembled, so anyone in your office can easily install them.
- Easily removed for cleaning and sterilizing. Top-rack dishwasher safe.
- Ideal for standardizing organization across workspaces to streamline processes and training.
- Custom designs make it easy for all staff to maintain your organizing system.
- Built with strong, high-quality acrylic that offers a clear view of all contents within the space.

## BOOST STAFF PERFORMANCE, IMPROVE EFFICIENCY, ELEVATE YOUR PATIENT EXPERIENCE, AND SAVE MONEY WITH ORGANIZE MY DRAWER'S PRACTICALLY PERFECT SOLUTIONS FOR:



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