

## LCI Member Companies and COVID-19

LCI conducted a survey of member companies to gather information on how they have adjusted Lean practices as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was reported that 93.8% of companies have adjusted Lean practices as a result of the pandemic. Those practices include social distancing requirements (6 feet apart), having virtual meetings, temperature scanning and disinfecting equipment. Some specific Lean practices that were mentioned to improve safety onsite included 5S to reinforce the importance of cleanliness and organization of materials, tools and equipment. Like many industries, a lot of design and construction work is being done virtually. Lean practices that are being used virtually include Last Planner System®, A3 and pull planning. Implementing these practices helps keep projects on schedule and supports mitigating the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Many have reported that they are continuing to do daily huddles and weekly work meetings, whether they take place on site or virtually with the intention of keeping project teams connected. Although the pandemic has changed the way we work, it has given folks the opportunity for continuous improvement. Communication has become even more important for everyone involved on projects. While we continue to look for a long term solution to COVID-19, the design and construction industry pushes on and continues to build necessary structures. Using Lean practices to stay efficient and timely has become even more important.

Some of the survey highlights include:

- Virtual work practices actually seem to have been helpful in improving focus on areas like continuous improvement, innovative milestone planning, and waste reduction.
- Social distancing requirements have prompted revised and somewhat slower-paced work schedules for trade contractors, which actually has served to improve work flow and trade stacking.
- Enhanced use of visual communications tools and methods are improving safety and making virtual meetings more productive.
- Numerous companies report stronger efforts towards improved communication between and among teams, which has served to promote collaboration and team building.
- Several respondents noted successful adaptation of traditional Lean methods to virtual in doing pull planning, retrospectives, continuous improvement, etc.
- Technology is not a panacea, but tools like Trello and Sharepoint are enhancing productivity in various ways in the virtual work environment.
- One of the most positive comments made seems to sum up much of our industry's experience in continuing to pursue Lean even in the face of COVID 19 restrictions: "Doing things virtually has been extremely effective, and easier than many people thought it would be."