

Recently, LCI asked our member companies to answer the question: **What Lean practices has your team/company found especially helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic?** We received over 30 responses. Some of the 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."

Here are the specific comments we received:

We use the Trello platform to manage all of our service, installs, and deliveries without in-person contact, and allow everyone to communicate in real time with photos, notes, etc.

LPS, Scrum, A3s, and 5S.

Using SharePoint to sort documents and records.

Phase Pulls are more critical now. We're taking our projects and breaking phases down a little more to create mini milestones for teams to focus on. We've explored three tools for digital planning via demos and now are in the initial stages of implementing the one we chose.

Virtual teams are able to focus more on delivering real value without adding waste.

Our Lean Daily Management System has proved invaluable.

Work scheduling with less trades in one work area has improved flow and trade stacking.

It has caused us to "continuously improve." We hold weekly manager calls to go over both challenges AND successes for every project. New ideas to execute the work come out of these calls.

Visual communication has been an extremely powerful way to help people remember social distancing.

Daily huddles, weekly work meetings.

LPS in design coordinated with Scrum and Takt.

More intensive communication surrounding the reinforcement of our continuous improvement practices, especially across Divisions. Encouragement has been the targeted message.

Our experience has been helpful in organizing and hosting virtual meetings more effectively for our operations teams. We've also had to adapt new ways to pull plan & host retrospectives virtually in order to support the virtual platforms.

Based on a strong structure for our lean support and resources, we have been able to continue the collaboration and continuous improvement virtually. Enhanced focus on collaboration and team mentality has provided specific and rapid-response client support.

A3 problem solving for schedule recovery, and more dashboards (visual management) so that meetings are more productive.

LPS, 5S and Respect for people

Virtual Pull Planning, remote coaching

Huddles, as a regular check-in process

Lean Coffees have been awesome: sharing best practices and--more importantly--keeping people connected.

Problem solving A3 opportunities, visual management (simple signage)

Doing things virtually has been extremely effective, and easier than many people thought it would be.