Kaizen For Sore Feet

by Anna Wells, Editor, IMPO

I'm by no means a trade show amateur. In fact, I've walked so many expo halls over the course of my career in trade media I probably have permanent shin splints — the result of several marathons of dress shoes on concrete.

As I approached the task of packing for Design & Manufacturing Midwest this week, my primary area of focus was on how best to maintain my overall comfort throughout these long days. What would provide adequate support, but without any substantial heel? How important was fashion on the fashion vs. comfort graph? As a runner, my feet have been through a lot, and when possible, I can't play fast and loose with their best interests.

But the more I thought about the potential hazards of the upcoming week — and because Lean concepts dominate my thinking processes (job hazard) — I realized I may have been misguided in my approach. Maybe this would become a whole lot easier if my focal point was not my shoes, but my schedule.

This video titled "Toast Kaizen [1]," by GBMP, is an interesting look at the types of time-wasters that often wind up being an easy fix . Most involve motion savings — not taking extra steps or making extra movements in order to obtain the same eventual results.

It stands to reason that applying Lean principles to my show scheduling could not only save me time, but also save me some foot, knee, and lower back agony. Rather than dismissing this type of planning as being too difficult — who wants to stare at a floor plan? — I decided that it's this hurdle of perceived difficulty that keeps my feet bandaged for days following my typical show. So instead of focusing on apparel, this year I will take a more structured approach to my meetings. If I can develop a map that amounts to the least possible backtracking and leave my booth meandering for the final day, I think I can get out of this in much better shape than in past years.

For those of you with a Lean background, think about this when planning your next trade show — or even your next trip to the mall. As we've seen above, even making toast can become more efficient. I'm not suggesting you Lean your whole life: I would get no pleasure out of constantly deconstructing my daily tasks. But on a limited amount of time — and when your feet are at stake — it might benefit you to take the lessons you've learned on the plant floor, and exercise them on another floor.

Source URL (retrieved on *12/28/2014 - 7:49pm*):
http://www.chem.info/blogs/2009/10/kaizen-sore-feet

Links:
[1] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N89JJ991pE