

In Japanese, “gemba” is known as the “real place”. In Lean Six Sigma, we do what is called a “**Gemba Walk**”. Gemba walks are a fundamental part of Lean Six Sigma, and are normally one of the first steps in starting a project.



A **Gemba walk** is defined as the action of going to the unit or work area to see the actual process, understanding the work, and learning the process by asking questions. It is about getting a working understanding of the process, looking for waste, and identifying opportunities for improvement. A gemba walk is not about going to the unit and finding fault in the process, nor is it about trying to fix issues or problems right away. There are three main items stressed during a gemba walk::

1. Observation – in person observation; you must be present!
2. Value Add Location - observing where the work is done as opposed to discussing it in a conference room
3. Teaming – interacting with the people and process to see how it can change for the better

It is also extremely important to observe the culture in the work area you are completing your gemba walk in. Are they ready for change? Can you identify the early adopters?

***Please see the Gemba Walk template to guide you on your gemba walk.***