

整理・整頓・清掃・清潔・躰  
Seiri Seiton Seiso Seiketsu Shitsuke

# The 5S Philosophy

Improving Organizational Standards for Cleanliness, Efficiency, and Success

整理・整頓・清掃・清潔・躰

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## Introduction to the 5S Philosophy

The 5S philosophy focuses on **effective workplace organization and standardized work procedures**. It is based on five Japanese words that begin with S. This document contains a translation of those words and their corresponding values into the English language.

5S programs have been implemented in organizations around the world as a way to **improve production values** while also improving employee morale and safety.

The 5S philosophy may be applied to most any workplace scenario in a short period of time due to its simple nature. However, we are aware that most every organization has specific needs. If you have questions about how **Graphic Products can assist you as you implement your 5S program**, please feel free to contact us at any time using the information printed on the front of this booklet.



*Before 5S implementation*



*After 5S implementation*

# 整理 Seiri

# SORT

# 1

The first S, *Seiri*, calls for the **elimination of unnecessary items that have collected around work areas**. As debris and unused objects build up, productivity often takes a turn for the worse. In unproductive workspaces, frustrations mount when workers find that they are unable to satisfactorily finish the task at hand. Therefore, it is vital to implement a workplace sorting system.

One effective visual method of identifying unneeded items is called “**red tagging**.” In this method, labels or signs are used to identify two areas:

1. **One area for the collection of unused items**
2. **One area for tools or other items that are frequently used**

Be sure to use separate labels to indicate potentially hazardous materials.

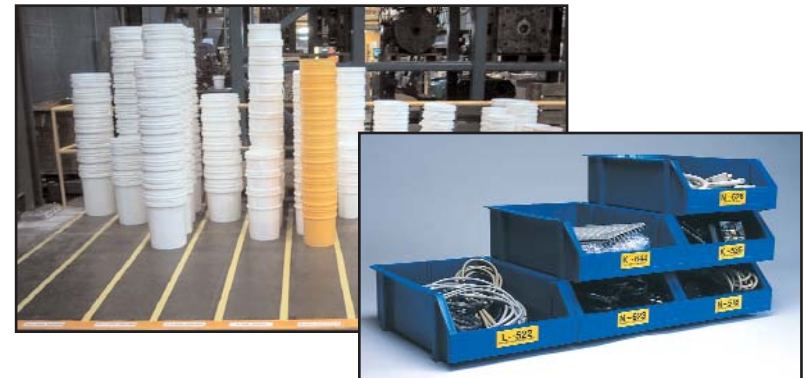
After the unused items are gathered, they should be moved to a well-identified collection area that has been specifically established for this purpose. **Be sure to use clearly visible labels and signs to make the purpose of this area clear.** Signs should describe the process of turning in items for collection.

Once these “red tag,” or unused items, are brought to the collection area, perform an evaluation. Items that are potentially useful may be subsequently labeled for cleaning and storage, while tools or implements that have reached their end-of-life point should be discarded.

## Sort - Conclusion

With the completion of the first S, Sorting, you will see **three main results**:

1. **Increased Productivity** - The purpose of individual work areas will be more apparent, leading to a highly efficient workflow.
2. **Workers will be more satisfied with their environment.** Employee morale will increase as junk items or materials that are potential health hazards are identified and removed.
3. **The end product of your labors will be much improved as full attention can be paid to production.** Employees will no longer need to focus on tangential tasks such as locating tools or implementing their own organization systems.



整頓  
Seiton

# SET IN ORDER

2

Now that your workplace has been sorted, it is time to implement a more comprehensive system of organization. While sorting is an effective method, used by itself it is only a preliminary measure.

Set In Order (*Seiton*) focuses on **effective storage and organization methods**, with the end goal of developing an environment that resists clutter and aids long-term productivity.

In order to set your workplace in order, you must determine:

1. What items or areas you need in order to do your job
2. Where those items should be located

If your tools and materials are excessive, return to the first S, Sort, and remove unneeded items to a location more suitable for long-term storage. Once you have identified your most commonly used tools and materials, find an accessible location for them. If this tool storage area is located at some distance from your actual work location, consider ways to make your toolset more portable.

Some other strategies to effectively set things in order include:

1. **Marking spaces & installing modular shelving & cabinets.** Floor markings are appropriate for warehouses with otherwise insufficient boundary marking systems
2. In workspaces with extensive interior wall space, **signs and labels should be used to help orient workers and assist workflow.** For example, small overhead maps (“You are here”) and legends can be printed on both labels and signs, and affixed to walls.
3. As we touched on in Section 1, **all items placed in storage should be clearly labeled** since they may be neglected for long periods of time. **In many cases, it is appropriate to affix RTK (Right To Know) labels or other warning labels to containers used in storage areas.**



*Above: Right-to-Know Label  
Right: Creating order by marking floors  
and walls for frequently used items.*

It is also important to consider installing **shelving and cabinets** that are easily accessible and can be adjusted as necessary. Because production requirements can change frequently, it is important to implement an organization system that is customizable.

## Set in Order - Conclusion

The first two S's (Sort and Set In Order) provide a strong foundation for a workplace driven not only by skills and labor, but by the values of organization and simplicity. Though extra discipline is necessary at first, these habits will begin to pay dividends almost immediately.



Once you have eliminated the clutter in your work area, it is important to **thoroughly clean that area and the equipment in it**. Leaks, squeaks and vibrations involving clean equipment can often be easily detected, but a dirty workplace tends to be distracting and equipment faults go unnoticed. Clean workplace conditions are also important to employee health, morale, and safety. These factors add up to impact your company's bottom line.

During the initial cleaning, employees will notice areas that seem to especially attract garbage or spills. It is important to make a note of these areas. After the cleaning is done, special care should be taken:

1. To reorganize problem areas
2. Fix equipment that may be leaking
3. Take steps necessary to ensure that the problem will not persist in the future

In this way, a little effort in the beginning will reduce the necessity of deep cleaning later. Make sure to evaluate your facility's ability to keep clean.

1. Are areas containing cleaning equipment properly marked?
2. Are cleaning supplies replenished and marked with instructions for use?
3. Are there enough waste receptacles, and are they clearly labeled?



After the first cleaning it is important to look for areas that are still dingy or dirty. This may indicate that you need stronger cleaning solvents or tools.

Cleaning operations can coincide with equipment evaluations in order to ensure that proper care and maintenance is observed.

As employees clean their work areas, they will become familiar with the basic functions of the equipment around them and will enjoy greater safety and productivity as a result.

## Shine - Conclusion

The benefits of a clean workplace are readily apparent after a short period of time. Employee morale increases, and the most productive time can be dedicated to the most important tasks. Considering the short amount of time required, the results of a good, thorough cleaning can be remarkable.

# 清潔 Seiketsu STANDARDIZE 4

Cleaning and organization systems implemented without established standards tend to lose effectiveness with time. Allow your employees to participate in the development of standards that improve workplace conditions. Ask for feedback as you find the best way to balance employee morale with production concerns. **Keep employees informed by making the standards visible. Use customized posters, signs and labels where applicable.**

Standards offer employees and employers a way to reach common goals while showing fairness to both sides. **Cleaning and organization standards based on the 5S system should be clearly displayed around the workplace using signs and posters.** Labels can also be used as reminders to be placed on individual pieces of equipment.

To aid memorization and implementation, pick a **5S color scheme** for your facility that aids in quick reference to 5S-related materials. For example, areas containing many black-on-white signs may be outfitted with a white-on-green sign where cleaning or organization instructions are necessary.

As your employees adjust themselves to this new environment, **make sure your standards are easy to understand** and offered in multiple languages where necessary.

## Standardize - Conclusion

Standards are the backbone of a successful 5S program. Adherence to those standards creates an environment wherein employees can confidently pursue their production goals.



*Left: Before the implementation of 5S Standards.*

*Below: Everything is labeled and organized nicely using 5S standards*



This is by far the most difficult S to implement and achieve. People tend to resist change, and even the most well-structured 5S plan will fail if not constantly reinforced.

Fortunately, there are effective methods of sustaining positive growth.

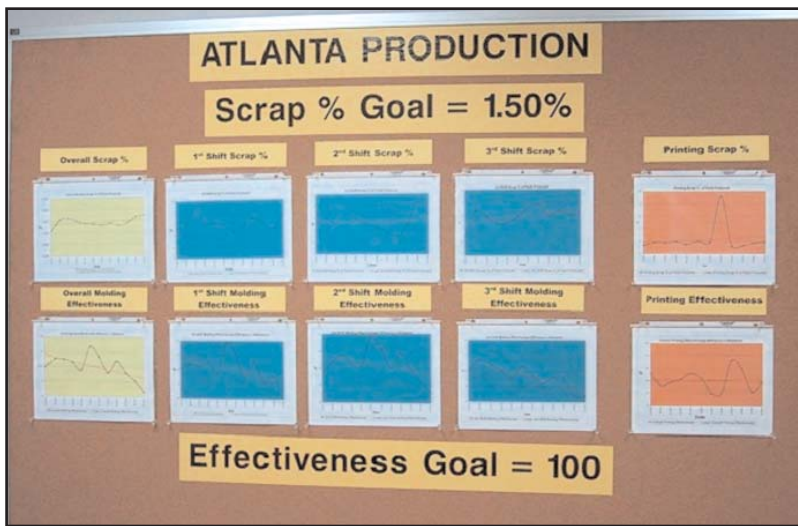
Begin by asking yourself relevant questions:

1. **What goals do you wish to achieve by starting a 5S program?**
2. **How will you measure your progress?**
3. **What tools and resources are available to help measure this progress and sustain growth?**

If your 5S goals are measurable, such as “pass inspections 5 months in a row,” it is important to find a visible way to measure your progress, perhaps by **printing posters or signs that can be written on as important quotas are met**. Evaluate your resources to find ways of obtaining visual materials.

You will also find that employees benefit by **easy access to label and sign-making systems**. With the ability to print visual materials on demand, items that require organization can be quickly labeled by most any employee.

Finally, look for ways to emphasize the positive results of a 5S program. Catch phrases and slogans can be used to make sure no one forgets the significance of your goals.



*Setting standards then sustaining them is the cornerstone of the 5S program.*

## Sustain - Conclusion

Sustaining newly-changed behavior isn't easy. However, the results are rewarding for everyone involved. As employees grow into the 5S system, they will find it energizing and fulfilling. Be sure to go the extra mile to make sure your workplace is well prepared to continually observe 5S standards.

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