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### Best Practices in Cycle Time Reduction

Best practices in cycle time reduction involve finding every opportunity to reduce complexity and eliminate waste without sacrificing quality.

By targeting waste in time, effort, materials, and space, cycle time reduction best practices get rid of duplicate efforts, surplus inventory, and excess work-in-process. Many of the techniques used to reduce cycle time coincide with principles of lean manufacturing.

**Cell Manufacturing:** Replace a project approach to assembly with production cells that make product components and subassemblies. Locate similar parts, materials, and assemblies close to each other on the shop floor to reduce unnecessary movement of people and materials.

**Pull System:** Regulate the movement of materials through the production process according to demand, sending the product ahead only when the next manufacturing cell is ready for it. This eliminates the pileup of work-in-process.

**Just-in-Time Purchasing:** Synchronize procurement of raw materials and parts closely with shop floor demand. Give vendors responsibility for replenishing supplies.

**Flow Manufacturing:** Arrange production in a logical chain so that components and subassemblies move sequentially from one process to the next.

**Measurement:** Establish metrics for tracking performance in purchasing, sales, finance, and operations to ensure coordination of activities.

**Simplify:** Standardize parts and operations to eliminate unnecessary options, and establish financial penalties to control customer change orders.

**Visual Management:** Sort and organize materials, tools, equipment, and supplies used on the shop floor for orderly production. Label and color-code elements of the workplace to keep traffic lanes open and allow ready access to necessary supplies and equipment.



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