

# Identifying Interruptions

How a Canadian Bank was able to identify interruptions in value added activities and improve productivity by more than 30%.

**Type of organization: Bank**  
(Information Technology department)

**Problem:** IT projects always surpass estimated costs and time frames.

**Objective:** Discover the reasons for these variances and make the necessary corrections.

**Methodology:** Continuous improvement project: Kaizen.

**Measures:** With the help of **UMT Plus software developed by Laubrass Inc.**, the improvement project members programmed, on twelve PDA's, the various possible causes of the many slowdowns experienced by the people working in the IT department.

It was not the quality of work that was questioned, but rather all of the interruptions (telephone calls, faxes, queries from colleagues, etc.) that people in the department had to deal with.

During 5 days, time measurements were registered for the approximately 140 IT personnel.

**Results:** With one click, all of the collected information was instantly compiled. The results stunned the continuous improvement team.

*On average, each person from the IT group was disturbed every three minutes.*

*Furthermore, the process added value was only at 10%.*

Can you imagine people's astonishment in light of these results? How can anyone concentrate on a project with so many interruptions?

**Improvements:** It was agreed upon that one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon would be set aside to discuss questions relating to the various projects.

A preparation period was also required to ensure the time spent answering questions would be productive.

During the remainder of the day, interruptions were accepted or prohibited according to the project's priority code. Furthermore, a room was designated for certain special projects where interruptions were forbidden.

Cost of improvements: \$0.

**Results after improvements:**  
Two months after the improvements were implemented, measurements were retaken. The personnel added value had increased from 10% to 30%.

The IT personnel are interrupted every 30 minutes on average compared to once every 3 minutes before the improvement project.





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Laubrass Inc facilitates and optimizes the process of conducting audits, inspections and work measurement studies for improvement initiatives, by leveraging handheld computing tools and Tablet PC.