

Where is labour time lost?

It can be a shock to find out that even though everyone seems to always be flat out the actual number of hours sold is only in the 50%-60% of those available!

Time is so easily lost; it's like water slipping through your fingers or a leaking tank.

Here are 13 different ways the productive team can lose time

1. Talking to customers and supplier reps that call or just drop in
2. Booking jobs in and liaising with customers to see what they need
3. Preparing quotes
4. Stock control, ordering stock, inwards deliveries
5. Inefficient shed layout (running here and there to get parts)
6. Insufficient parts leading to many small orders and delays
7. Training time, travel time (not paid for) and team meeting time
8. An extra few minutes taken for AM & PM tea can mount up
9. Loafing around first thing in the morning waiting for instructions
10. Loading and unloading trucks
11. Repairs and maintenance to plant, equipment or vehicles
12. Lack of materials, tools on outside jobs...requiring trips to get supplies
13. Due to poor recording staff forced to guess time taken on jobs.

7 more systemic causes of lost time

1. Under-estimating standard times on certain jobs (e.g. should take 90 minutes but actually takes 110 minutes, but only 90 can be sold)
2. Over-estimate the team ability...they may be slower than you think. Indeed, some may choose to go slow in case they run out of work
3. Workers may fear the bosses reaction if they record 100% of the time they spend on the job; so it is deliberately understated
4. Fear: *"We couldn't charge that much"*
5. If there are no targets or monitoring of actual performance against target misses out on the power of a target
6. Lack of feedback to the team keeps them in the dark.
7. The owner's productive time (i.e. on the tools) needs to be included in all calculations but may be lost because he's the boss