Obeya Fundamentals

TRAINING MODULE & TRAVEL JOURNAL

HOW OBEYA CREATES SYSTEMIZED ENGAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE & INCLUSIVE DECISION MAKING





OBEYA





Welcome!

Greetings and welcome to the Obeya Fundamentals training module, a pivotal step in your professional development path within the world of Obeya. Here at the Obeya Association, we are thrilled to provide a nurturing community for Obeya practitioners worldwide, equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to unlock the full potential of Obeya.

Prepare to embark on a transformative journey as we delve into the profound capabilities of Obeya. This powerful methodology empowers organizations to cultivate heightened consciousness and make informed decisions that drive positive contributions to our world.

By joining forces with the Obeya Association, you gain access to a global network of professionals who share your unwavering commitment to conscious organizational development.

Together, let us become catalysts for change, shaping the future of organizational excellence. Join us today and embrace the opportunity to leave a lasting positive imprint on our world!



As Obeya Associate you can login on the Obeya Association platform and exchange experiences with Obeya practitioners from around the world, visit the Obeya Summit ask our Al assistant for smart Obeya solutions or browse the largest Obeya library in the world.

FOUNDERS OF THE OBEYA ASSOCIATION





BART BONGERS

DOLF REIJNDERS



CHECK OUT THE STORY OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE OBEYA ASSOCIATION AND MORE OBEYA CONTENT ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL



OBEYA association obeya-association.com

PURPOSE 'Create conscious organizations capable to build a better world for future generations.'

MISSION



- A community of Obeya professionals that help organizations set up Obeya's that lead to sustainable and inclusive decisions.
 - 1) Dedicated and motivated Obeya professionals
 - A vibrant international Obeya 'friends-of-friends' platform where Obeya professionals can help each other out and experiences can be shared
 - Professional & personal growth through valuable and practical Obeya content

FOR THE PLANET

The Obeya Association is a proud member of the 1% for the planet movement and dedicates 1% of its annual revenue to carefully selected causes.

VISION

With the world growing increasingly complex and the stakes higher than ever before, organizations need a business philosophy that help them deal with said challenges.

Obeya proposes to include perspectives and information sources, devote resources for preparedness and build up empirical data when moving into the necessary unknowns that will shape our future. Organizations need the horizontal connections that Obeya creates, so we can learn and adapt as a collective.



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A worldwide professional 'friends-of-friends' network

Our global community of professionals is dedicated to building conscious organizations that can create a better world for future generations, and we believe that the Obeya methodology is the key to achieving this goal.

In this module, we explore the principles that underpin the Obeya methodology. By understanding these principles, you will gain the necessary knowledge and skills to harness the power of Obeya. From creating an effective workspace environment to fostering inclusive and sustainable decision-making practices, the Obeya Fundamentals module will equip you with the tools and insights needed to cultivate high-performing Obeyas.



- international Sensel Network
- Quarterly international meetup
- Scientific research
- Use case development
- Market developments

Obeya Coach Network

- Local meetups
- Best practice sharing
- Maturity models
- Mentoring





Obeya Fundamentals Qualification

The Obeya Fundamentals module is the first step in the Obeya certification curriculum. The certification provides you with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to understand and apply the fundamentals of Obeya.

This module focuses on building a strong foundation in Obeya principles and practices, enabling you to effectively implement and manage Obeya in your organization.

By completing the Obeya Fundamentals module, you will gain the expertise needed to start your Obeya journey and enhance your career in this in-demand field. The Obeya Fundamentals certification enables you to act as a professional Obeya practitioner with proven knowledge and experience.



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THIS ICON IS USED TO INDICATE GROUP EXERCISES USEFUL FOR STARTING UP AN OBEYA

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Introduction

Welcome to the Obeya Fundamentals training module, where we embark on a journey to uncover the essence of Obeya and its profound impact on organizations.

In this chapter, we will delve into the captivating world of Obeya, exploring its origins, its relationship with lean and agile practices, and the remarkable historic timeline that has shaped its evolution.

But first, let us ask you a question: Have you ever wondered how some organizations consistently deliver exceptional products and services, exceeding customer expectations? The answer lies in the power of effective communication, collaboration, and customer feedback. And that's precisely what Obeya is all about.

Obeya, derived from the Japanese words " $angle \pi$ meaning "large room" or "room," has a long and fascinating history that spans continents and disciplines.

We invite you to join us in unraveling the secrets of Obeya, understanding its purpose, and discovering the principles that deserve our utmost attention. Prepare to be captivated by the rich historical background, the fusion of Eastern and Western philosophies, and the practical applications that await you.

So, are you ready to unlock the potential of Obeya and revolutionize your organization's approach to collaboration and innovation? Let's dive in and explore the transformative power of Obeya together!





"A physical and/or digital space where strategy meets execution. The Obeya approach builds alignment and ownership across diverse groups of stakeholders to solve complex problems, drive cultural change and get work done."





Sustainable and inclusive decision making

Most people know Obeya as a physical or digital workspace where strategy meets execution. Since Obeya guides both behavior as well as a work environment design, Obeya deserves a wider definition. An Obeya can thus be regarded as a system, a concept and even a philosophy, defined by a particular set of ideas ("principles") that enable inclusive and sustainable decision making. This set of ideas comprises of 11 Obeya Principles which back the powerful combination between behavior and work environment design.

Obeya supports effective pursuit of strategic goals:

- Achieves team alignment
- Promotes coherent, purposeful action
- Helps deliver meaningful results across the organization

Sustainable decision making means: decisions are oriented on long term value creation. Every day decisions are constantly weighed according to their longer horizon merits, leading to organizations that are able to shift gradually when needed. They become responsive. Change can become a normal - non intruding - part of every day operations.

Inclusive decision making means: including multiple information sources and multiple perspectives simultaneously. Taking broadly supported decisions saves valuable time. Better decisions can be made. Faster.

A "traditional" organization (designed primarily for stability) is often rigid and slow moving. Governance models are often too complex, displaying many vertical command structures and too little horizontal connections.



Obeya - a long history of learning & improving

Obeya or Oobeya (from Japanese 大 部屋) literally means "large room" or "room". The roots of what is now a valuable management practice can be found across continents, with many disciplines influencing each other throughout history.

The Analects of Confucius 2500 years ago (China, 479 - 221 BC) seem to be the earliest notion of what later developed into many different management philosophies. The Analects are believed to be written up by Confucius' disciples over the course of 30 to 50 years.

The Analects could be regarded as an influential social and ethical philosophy. Rich, diverse and over 2500 years old, Confusian tradition teaches about the idea that good life lies in social relations, starting with family and extending into friends and community. Confucianism highlights the question on what roles we occupy in our lifetime and what our obligations are regarding those roles.

Confucius proposed learning as a cycle of stages, in which early stages are focused around improving understanding. Next, according to Confucius, we need to think critically about what we (want to) learn.

Simultaneously, actual physical places arise where 'the way is practiced' which evolves throughout Eastern history. A central tradition within these places is the use of visual stimulation, a link with modern day Obeya use.

Confucianism favors light government, informal means of social control and emotional harmony. Confusius can be considered an educator, encouraging constant questioning in the persuit of learning.



Confucius' ideas on learning from acting in order to improve can be considered fundamental to modern day Obeya practice. Read more on Obeya's Eastern roots on www.obeya-association.com.

CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO ON THE ESSENCE OF OBEYA AND ITS EASTERN ROOTS ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL





Some time later in history, the West starts building upon an idea we would now call a 'scientific' approach. Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626 AD), an English philosopher and statesman, can be regarded as highly influential in this field. He argued for inductive reasoning and careful observation (often derived from nature) to avoid misleading conclusions. One of Bacons' goals in life was to uncover truth. His methodological ways to uncover truth (science) also show a clear link to modern day Obeya's. It is believed that Bacons' approach provided the roots of Plan - Do - Check - Act (PDCA) improvement cycles as proposed by Shewhart and Deming (1930) and eventually laid the foundations for SCRUM and Agile.

With the start of the Industrial Age roughly from the 1800's on, management practices evolve and Eastern and Western management philosophies start to influence each other. In Japan the company of Toyota successfully adopted Deming's ideas, which lead to the Toyota Production system (TPS). Resulting in higher standards for manufacturing. The resulting competition motivated American manufacturers to implement statistical quality control in the United States.

From the 1980's we see both MIT and Harvard playing vital roles in modeling management practices and providing empirical data/analyses. Visual management and the use of Obeya rooms became an integral part of said practices and are still becoming increasingly popular in modern days.

Researching Obeya's rich historical background we can see:

- Many exchanges between Eastern and Western philosophies throughout history
- Strong link with improvement cycles, especially PDCA
- Obeya practice logically rooted within both Lean and Agile practices
- Both MIT and Harvard have been influential; modeling practices and making them available for broader audiences
- Focus on work floor and human development



Francis Bacons' methodological (scientific) ways to uncover truth influence Western management practices before blending in with Eastern management practices.



Lean, Agile & Obeya are historically linked

Lean management, Agile, and Obeya are historically intertwined because they all share the same origins and principles.

Lean management was first developed by Toyota in the 1930s, and it focused on maximizing efficiency and minimizing waste. The principles of Lean manufacturing were then applied to other industries, such as healthcare and finance, and it evolved into a business management methodology.

Agile, on the other hand, was first introduced in 2001 with the publication of the Agile Manifesto, a set of guiding values and principles for Agile development. Agile was initially used in software development, but it was later adopted in other fields such as project management and product development. All three methodologies share the same origins and principles: Lean management, Agile, and Obeya all focus on customer satisfaction and continuous improvement. They also prioritize communication and collaboration, and they use visual management tools to manage the work.

This historical intertwined connection between these three methodologies is one of the reasons why they are often used together and complement each other, leading to better results for the customer, faster innovation cycles, happy employees and improved overall performance of the organization.





Benefits of combining Obeya with Lean management and Agile methodologies

- Improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's processes. By using visual management in an Obeya room, teams can identify and eliminate waste and improve the flow of materials, information and people. This can lead to cost savings and improved quality.
- Improve communication and collaboration. Obeya creates a centralized location for all stakeholders to communicate, collaborate, and make decisions. This can lead to faster decision making, improved problem-solving and better alignment among team members.
- Improve customer satisfaction. By using Lean management and Agile methodologies, teams can focus on providing value to customers and meeting their needs. In addition, Obeya can help teams to gather customer feedback and use it to improve the product or service.
- Improve the adaptability to changing requirements. The ability to adapt to changing customer requirements and feedback is a key benefit of Agile and Lean management, and using Obeya can enhance this capability. Teams can quickly identify and resolve issues, and make adjustments as needed to ensure that the final product or service meets the customer's needs.

By combining Obeya with Lean management and Agile methodologies, teams can deliver better results for the customer and improve the overall performance of the organization.



Lean management: all about creating value

Lean management is a business management methodology that is focused on on providing value to customers by maximizing efficiency and minimizing waste. It is based on the principles of Lean manufacturing, which was first developed by Toyota in the 1930s. Lean management seeks to identify and eliminate all forms of waste, such as overproduction, waiting, excess inventory, overprocessing, motion, and defects, in order to improve efficiency and quality.

The core principle of Lean management is continuous improvement, known as Kaizen. Kaizen is a philosophy of continuous small improvements that, over time, can lead to significant improvements in the overall performance of an organization. Lean management also emphasizes the involvement of all employees in the improvement process and encourages them to identify and eliminate waste.

Lean management also prioritizes flow, which means creating a smooth and efficient process from raw materials to the delivery of a product or service to the customer. This is achieved by eliminating bottlenecks and delays and ensuring that materials, information and people flow seamlessly through the process. Lean management also promotes the use of visual management to visualize the flow of work, and to identify and resolve problems quickly. This helps to keep the team focused on the most important tasks and to keep the process moving smoothly.

Lean management is not only applied in manufacturing but also in various industries such as healthcare, finance, construction, and many others. Some of the well-known lean management frameworks are Lean Six Sigma and Lean Startup.

Lean management is based on the principle of value creation through continuous improvement, the elimination of waste, and the flow of materials, information and people.



Agile: Deliver working products fast

Agile is a methodology that is focused on delivering value to customers through rapid, iterative and flexible processes. Agile teams work in short cycles, called sprints, usually 2-4 weeks, to deliver working products or services to customers as soon as possible. The team receives feedback from customers on each sprint and uses it to improve and iterate the product or service. This approach allows Agile teams to quickly adapt to changing requirements and customer needs.

Agile methodologies also prioritize communication and collaboration between team members. Daily stand-up meetings are used to ensure that everyone is on the same page and to identify and resolve any issues. Agile teams are self-organizing and cross-functional, which means that team members have different skills and expertise and are empowered to make decisions and manage their own work. This creates a sense of ownership and accountability among team members.

The Agile manifesto highlights four core values, which are:

- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
- Working software (products) over comprehensive documentation
- Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
- Responding to change over following a plan

These values are the foundation of Agile and provide a clear direction for Agile teams to follow. The key benefit of Agile is its ability to adapt to changing customer requirements and feedback, which results in delivering the right product or service that meets the customer's needs.

Agile prioritizes communication, collaboration, and customer feedback to ensure that the final product or service is exactly what the customer wants and needs.



Obeya - Historic timeline

Many roots of the Obeya can be found if you research history enough. This narrative is a grave generalization of the total historical picture. Nevertheless, we hope to show some of Obeya's essence by revealing some of its history - certainly not all of it.





Recent history - how Obeya gained momentum

Toyota put Obeya into practice back in 1993 launching their first Prius as a part of the Toyota Lean Manufacturing System. Takeshi Uchiyamada, a Toyota Chief Engineer, was given a difficult challenge: designing the car of the 21st century, with very aggressive fuel consumption targets.

In less than three years, the first hybrid car, the Prius, was brought to market – 15 years ahead of the competition.



If you think of an organization as a nervous system, then Obeya would be the brain of the system



To pull off such a feat, the Chief Engineer also had to invent a new product and process development approach. He designed a new kind of visual management, which has since spread across Toyota engineering offices: the Obeya. Analogies have been drawn between an Obeya and the bridge of a ship, a war room and even a brain.

It is a place of collective learning. Where information is synthesized and digested, analyzed and actions are prioritized. Finally, the aim of all this information is to take well informed decisions. Obeya uses both the power of information as well as it involves multiple parties perspectives and knowledge simultaneously.

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Introduction

Imagine a world where teams and organizations are empowered to unleash their full potential, where collaboration and communication flow seamlessly, and where everyone is aligned towards a common purpose. This is the world that Obeya envisions, and the "Why Obeya" chapter dives deep into the reasons why Obeya is a game-changer in today's fast-paced and complex business landscape.

In this chapter, we explore the fundamental benefits of Obeya, revealing how it can transform the way we work, think, and lead. Obeya is not just another management tool or methodology; it is a mindset, a way of being that fosters transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. From streamlining processes and improving decision-making to fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation, Obeya has proven to be a catalyst for positive change.

But why should you care about Obeya? Well, the answer lies in the immense potential it holds for you and your organization. By embracing Obeya, you can unlock hidden opportunities, break down silos, and create a shared vision that inspires and motivates your teams. It empowers individuals at all levels to contribute their unique perspectives and talents, leading to breakthrough ideas and breakthrough results.

So, if you're ready to embark on a transformative journey, the "Why Obeya" chapter will ignite your passion and fuel your desire to embrace this powerful approach.



Obeya is not just another management tool or methodology; it is a mindset, a way of being that fosters transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.



As a group, discuss the question stated below:

"ARE WE IN AN ERA OF CHANGE OR IN CHANGE OF AN ERA?"



Volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, or VUCA, is used to describe the influences of our world today and how this challenges us to make decisions and plans and deal with risks and changes. Obeya proposes a model that helps organizations learn on a continuous basis to deal with this. Obeya facilitates us to include different perspectives and information sources, to simplify, to devote resources and to yield empirical data through experiments. The ability of Obeya to help us deal with the challenges of our time makes working with Obeya increasingly popular.





FROM

- Disconnected Strategy and Execution
- Opinions and scattered information
- Lack of overview needed to make the right decisions
- X Isolated silo's
- Vertical reporting lines, hierarchies
- Y Process focus
- X Time & energy lost on updating, reactive

ТО

- **Focus**, set the right priorities
- Single source of truth, accelerated learning, short communication
- **Transparent progress** overview & actual operations status
- **Continuous improvement**, organizational development
- Leadership & team development, fast decision cycles
- Client focus, ownership on objectives
- Problem solving, result orientation, proactive







TRADITIONAL REPORT MANAGEMENT

- 1. Hierarchical Strategy Annual plans Department plans without coherence and synchronization
- 2.Excel sheets with numbers and unclear (& outdated) status updates
- 3. Infinite emails with reports and discussions on assumptions and choices to be made
- 4. Unclear coherence of all the programs, projects and KPI's
- 5.Long management meetings needed to discuss unclear results
- 6. Unclear escalations on unclear priorities
- 7.Hard to receive an overview on total program and change portfolio
- 8. Board ownership unclear
- 9. Behaviour not result oriented

OBEYA VISUAL MANAGEMENT

- 1.A visual flow from strategy to execution which is synchronized between the people involved and regularly reviewed
- 2. Visual status overview with the actual status being part of the responsibility of the Obeya attendant
- 3. Clear performance dialogues with each other leading to an unambiguous base point
- 4.Clear overview on the coherence of all programs and their results
- 5. Weekly short meeting on the results of the organization
- 6.Clear blockages are cascaded to the level on which they can be solved and are accompanied by clear priorities
- 7. Transparent visual overview on change portfolio and total portfolio
- 8. Full commitment on change agenda by leadership
- 9.Result oriented interventions on behavior of Obeya participants



GROUP EXERCISE

PLEASE PROVIDE ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ACCORDING TO THE BEST OF YOUR CURRENT KNOWLEDGE:

	A LITTLE	A LOT
Strategy and execution are connected	$ \bigcirc 1 \bigcirc 2 & 3 & 4 \\ \bigcirc \bigcirc$	5
We constantly learn from accurate information	$ \begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	5
We decide fast	$ \begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	5
Other teams / departments work towards the same objectives	$ \begin{array}{cccc} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ \bigcirc & \bigcirc & \bigcirc & \bigcirc & \bigcirc \\ \end{array} $	5
I know what other teams / departments are doing, why and when	$ \bigcirc 1 \bigcirc 2 & 3 & 4 \\ \bigcirc \bigcirc$	5
Our performance informs our priorities	$ \begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	5
I spend my worktime feeling it leads to something valuable	$ \overset{1}{\bigcirc} \overset{2}{\bigcirc} \overset{3}{\bigcirc} \overset{4}{\bigcirc} \overset{4}{\bigcirc} \overset{6}{\bigcirc} \overset{6}{\odot} \overset{6}{\bigcirc} \overset{6}{\odot} \overset{6}{{}} \overset{6}{{}} \overset{6}{{}} \overset{6}{{}}{} \overset{6}{{}} \overset{6}{{}$	5



What can you conclude?

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GROUP

PLEASE PROVIDE ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ACCORDING TO THE BEST OF YOUR CURRENT KNOWLEDGE:

Are we connected?	YES	NO	
Is everyone working on the same objective	YES	NO	
Are we meeting delivery/deadlines?	YES	NO	
Do our decisions reach everyone?	YES	NO	
Are we looking at the right information?	YES	NO	
Do we know which problems we want to solve?	YES	NO	
Are the right people involved to reach objectives?	YES	NO	



What can you conclude?

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Why do you exist as a group or as a company?

What binds you? What is the common purpose behind your everyday activities and what is the reason for working together? What is your contribution to the bigger whole?

What problems do you want to solve?

What would make your work more effective? What did your conclusions from previous exercises teach you?

What information do you need?

Knowing which decisions you want to make and which information is important, benefits fast decision cycles. Similarly, Obeya's with an unnecessary information overload can complicate decision making.

Our Obeya purpose:

Taking everything into consideration; **'What do you want your Obeya to result in?'** What should be the ultimate outcome of all Obeya activities and efforts?



From experience:

Obeya's that are purposefully designed are more likely to lead to clear (and hopefully measurable) results. Often they are easier to implement. Building an Obeya is always instrumental to achieving a higher purpose.

2.5 Define success for your Obeya



Direction	Success	Measure
HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?	HOW WILL YOU BE ABLE TO TELL IF YOU SUCCEEDED?	CAN YOU THINK OF A WAY TO OBJECTIVELY MEASURE PROGRESS?



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Introduction

Welcome to the chapter on "The 11 Obeya Principles"! Get ready to embark on a journey through the core principles that underpin the transformative power of Obeya. The 11 Obeya Principles are divided into four quadrants: **Mindset, Alignment, Workspace and Content.**

In the Mindset quadrant, we explore the power of cultivating a collaborative and growth-oriented mindset within the Obeya.

Moving on to the Alignment quadrant, we delve into the significance of aligning the purpose of the Obeya with the broader organizational strategy.

The Workspace quadrant takes us into the physical, digital and visual aspects of the Obeya, where we explore the design and setup of the workspace to promote effective communication, collaboration, and engagement.

Lastly, the Content quadrant focuses on the quality and relevance of the information shared within the Obeya, emphasizing the need for accurate data, analytics, and insights to support informed decisionmaking.

Together, these quadrants form the foundation for building a thriving Obeya that fosters collaboration, alignment, and continuous improvement.

As you immerse yourself in the 11 Obeya Principles, you'll witness their synergistic power in action. They will serve as your compass, guiding you towards building a thriving Obeya that fosters collaboration, alignment, and continuous improvement.



The 11 Obeya Principles are divided into four quadrants: Mindset, Alignment, Workspace, and Content.



A practical framework to build and improve your Obeya

An Obeya is as much about creating an effective workspace environment as it is about effective behavior. The both are represented in 4 quadrants around which an Obeya is build: **Mindset, Alignment, Workspace and Content.** The 11 Obeya Principles provide a further explanation and more detail. In essence, the 11 Obeya Principles define an Obeya.

The 11 Obeya Principles have very practical implications. Combined with the Obeya Builders and Obeya Host roles, they create a pragmatic and hands-on framework that will guide you through every step of your Obeya process. In the chapter on Obeya roles, you'll find a more extensive explanation of what each principle means for the roles of both the Obeya Builder and the Obeya Host.

You can start building an Obeya from any Principle and work your way through the other Principles. One by one, step by step.



What is your favorite quadrant? And why?

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3.2 The 11 Obeya Principles framework





3.3 Understanding the 4 quadrants



	MINDSET	ALIGNMENT
WHAT	Constructive behavior • Breaking the patterns of non-value adding or destructive behavior	Match work with ambitions • Align different parts of the organization in governance, decision-making and work rhythm
МОН	 Obeya leadership behavior for ALL people involved Integral and factual work assessment Offering help and support Providing feedback Showing trust and respect Leading by example 	
WHAT	WORKSPACE DIALC Make value creation flow visible • Visualize 'the plan' in an Obeya space that provides insight, overview and guidance	
МОН	 Design walls Plan - Do - Check - Act (PDCA) Strategy Portfolio Performance Actions Other relevant 	 Relevant Factual Reliable and updated Easy to understand

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Introduction: Different Obeya types and setups

In this chapter, we will explore the crucial elements that constitute the physical or digital space of an Obeya room.

We will learn how the Obeya "walls" play a vital role in structuring the flow of information within the Obeya room. Each wall serves as a designated space where various information items are strategically placed, creating a cohesive and visually impactful representation. The Walls provide a framework for categorizing and arranging information, facilitating clear and structured presentations.

One of the most commonly used and fundamental setups within the Obeya framework is the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) approach. However, it is important to note that the Obeya concept is adaptable to different circumstances. Depending on the available (digital) space and the specific needs of your organization, variations in the arrangement of walls and the items placed upon them may arise.

Throughout this chapter, we will explore the different items that can be placed on these walls, categorizing and organizing information.



Obeya Association founder Bart Bongers investigating a visual planning method in an Obeya at a factory in Japan



PDCA as a basic Obeya design template

A widely adopted approach to setup your Obeya structure is the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) approach, where the Obeya room is organized in alignment with the PDCA cycle. Activities associated with each stage of the cycle are grouped together on different walls or parts of the room. This arrangement allows for a clear visualization of the production cycle stages, facilitates effective communication, and supports collaborative problem-solving.

Do not be deceived by those who claim there is only one "right way" to approach building an Obeya. The truth is, there is no universal template that guarantees success. While methods like Leading With Obeya offer a decent plug and play framework, it is important to note that even these setups require incremental development and the expertise of welleducated Obeya professionals.







Use the concept of walls to cluster information and activities

In the realm of Obeya, we often speak of different "walls" that serve as the guiding structure for organizing information. These walls play a crucial role in shaping the basic information structure within the Obeya. Each wall serves as a designated space where various information items are brought together, creating a cohesive visual representation.

It is important to note that these walls should not exist in isolation. They should communicate and relate to one another, forming a harmonious whole. This interconnectedness ensures that the information flows seamlessly across the different walls, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the overall picture.

Now, let us consider the practical aspect of available (digital) space. It is not always feasible for everyone to have a dedicated room at their disposal. Factors such as windows, doors, and other physical constraints can pose challenges. However, fear not, for the Obeya concept is adaptable to different circumstances. Especially within larger organizations, it is common to encounter multiple approaches to Obeya, as the walls themselves often reflect the unique "Way of Working" within each team or department. This diversity allows for flexibility and customization, ensuring that the Obeya aligns with the specific needs and context of the organization.

Below an example of a real situation that could exist that you will need to deal with when building your Obeya:



Top-management works traditionally, with planning based around planning flows (gantt charts)

Within ICT people are used to Agile work methods

This situation on the left is an example of what you could encounter when setting up your Obeya structure. On the next page you'll see how practical workfloor reality can lead to different visualizations.


Creating your Obeya visual workspace: Gantt chart planning versus Agile

As you can see the different Ways of Working create different kind of visual management structures on the wall. There is no good or bad here. What you aim for is a true reflection of the actual situation at hand.





You'll have to navigate between different (visual) alternatives when setting up an Obeya. They will need to reflect actual workfloor practices. Sometimes you need to choose, sometimes you can represent more.



There are multiple approaches to create a succesful Obeya

An Obeya can be designed to serve different purposes. Developing your Obeya along the lines of the 11 Principles, guided by professional Obeya Builders and Hosts, your Obeya will evolve in the right direction. Nonetheless, throughout the years we have seen a couple of Obeya setups being used for certain purposes. They can help you choose a practical starting point based on the needs in your organization.

Underneath we'll briefly explain four Obeya types.



Portfolio, Valuestream and Program Obeya's can all become integrated parts within an Organization Obeya



Possible wall items

Every wall has an array of things to choose from to visualize. Underneath we have listed the most frequently used ones. In the Obeya Builder training you'll learn about each and every one of them and get to practice setting them up in an Obeya setting.

PLAN Strategy	DO Planning/portfolio	CHECK Performance	ACT Continuous improvement	WoW Way of Working
Voice-of-the-	Program / Project	Perfomance	To do - Doing - Done	Obeya Agenda
Customer	portfolio	indicators (KPI's)		
	management		Blockages /	Rules of
Purpose / Mission /		Services	impediments	engagement
Vision	Capacity	(run indicators)		
	management		Improvements	Decision log
True North / Hoshin		Financial	(short term)	
Kanri	Themes, Epic's /	performance		Successes
	Features	indicators		(to be celebrated)
Objectives Key				
Results (OKR)	Funnels	Employee satisfaction		
Organizational	Priorities			
Strategy		Team Performance		
	Product roadmap			
Big Hairy Goal		Customer		
(BHAG)	Improvement	satisfaction		
	project status			
Objectives /		Risk assessments		
Strategic themes	Value stream			
	mapping			

4.5 Your Obeya setup







What kind of Obeya setup appeals most to you? Why?



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Introduction

Welcome to the chapter on 'Obeya Roles'. In this chapter, we will explore the various roles that play a crucial part in the successful implementation and operation of an Obeya.

Within the Obeya framework, several roles contribute to its effectiveness and ensure a thriving environment for collaboration, decision-making, and continuous improvement. While each role holds its significance, we will place particular emphasis on the Builder and Host roles, as they are essential pillars in the Obeya ecosystem.

While the Builder and Host roles differ in their focus and responsibilities, they are both indispensable for a thriving Obeya. Together, they form a dynamic duo, ensuring that the Obeya not only functions effectively but also evolves and improves over time.

As you delve deeper into this chapter, you will gain a comprehensive understanding of the roles within the 11 Obeya Principles framework.



The different Obeya roles accelerate collective learning, speed up decision cycles, and anchor the Obeya in the long run.



Enabling Obeya Roles

Getting the best out of your Obeya requires specific expertise and skill. Skilled Obeya professionals anchor Obeya in your organization and provide discipline needed to achieve long term benefits.

Two important competency area's can be defined that make an Obeya work, summarized in two essential Obeya roles: **'Obeya Builders** and **Obeya Hosts'**.

They can count on guidance and counseling from an experienced **Obeya Coach.** Coaches also focus on the organizations bigger picture. They are linked to within Obeya Coach networks to share and learn best practices across different organizations.

The Obeya Coach network is connected to the international network of **Obeya Sensei's**. They are highly respected individuals with a remarkable standing within Obeya evolution.

These roles are defined to support effective organization of an Obeya and are not intended to introduce hierarchy within the Obeya. It is important that in an Obeya all participants and visitors can think and speak freely, so experience and knowledge can thrive.

From a practical point of view, the Builder and Host roles can be executed by one person. Each role can also be executed by several people simultaneously. The choice of how to divide and share responsibilities in an Obeya needs to both suit your organization and the maturity level of your Obeya.



Obeya Builder

Organizes the evolution of the actual Obeya space, Obeya content and the Obeya's position in the organizational context & infrastructure.



Obeya Host

Aids and develops Obeya meeting interactions. Turns learnings into sustainable decisions through informed conversation.



Obeya Coach

Coaches and educates Builders and Hosts. Guides Obeya implementation towards cultural and behavioral change and awareness.



Obeya Sensei

Leading the evolution of the field. Exceptional wisdom and expertise in the area of Obeya. Authority both within and outside of the community.

From experience:

"Appoint Obeya champions and/or educate Obeya Hosts and Builders. People that understand the organization, strategy, culture and structure. Who can organize the implementation of an Obeya. Who are skilled at hosting Obeya sessions. These people ensure the discipline and rigor needed for an Obeya to provide meaning and get the Obeya well anchored in your organization."



Builder & Host: two different roles, both essential for a thriving Obeya

Before an Obeya can be used properly, it literally needs to be built up from the ground. The Obeya building process requires decisions about set-up, structure and content. This is where the role of Builder steps in. It is the Builders' assignment to bring an Obeya to an operational level. Once an Obeya is operational, the main focus shifts towards maintaining the information and using it effectively during Obeya meetings. This is the moment when the Obeya Host enters the stage. It is a Hosts' job to create a safe environment in which smooth and effective conversations take place that enable continuous group learning and conscious decision-making. Both roles demand a specific -and different- set of skills, attitudes and knowledge which is summarized in the following overview.







Builder

Knowledge

- Policy deployment, a.o.:
 - strategic imaging: OKR, Hoshin Kanri, Balanced Scorecard, valuestreams
 - operational imaging: Kanban, PI planning, Agile portfolio management, Customer Journey, Product roadmaps
 - PDCA cycles

Skills

- Analytical thinking: analysis
- Project management
- Continuous improvement
- Technical IT
- Visual management

Attitudes

- Accuracy
- Engagement
- Integrity

Host

Knowledge

- Psychological safety
- Group dynamics
- Meeting design preparations
- Partcipatory dialogue
- Applying change models
- Continuous learning engagements

Skills

- Analytical thinking: evaluation
- Performance dialogue
- Listening
- Facilitation
- Team Coaching

Attitudes

- Social & environmental awareness
- Customer orientation
- Organizational sensitivity
- Independent
- Servant leadership



Figure Development instrument Obeya Builder

As you will learn later on, the Obeya Association focuses on two aspects: 1) developing worldwide knowledge and expertise about Obeya and 2) supporting the professional development of Obeya professionals. The figure above is an example of how this knowledge is translated into tools as part of the toolkit to train and coach Obeya professionals. If you want to learn more about the development pathway to become Obeya Builder and/or Host, see the final chapter of this module.





Ð

CHECK THE OBEYA HOST AND OBEYA BUILDER ACTIVITIES AND LINK THEM TO YOUR **FOCUS SCAN RESULTS**!

Mindset



People come together in the Obeya to respectfully see, learn & act on vital information

People coming together in meaningful interaction are the biggest compliment to any Obeya workspace. Integrity of the information presented is important for people to trust the Obeya process.

OBEYA BUILDEF

Obeya Hosts cultivate curiosity. In safe environments, multiple perspectives benefit the sustainability of decisions. Questions that turn insights into action are a Hosts' ultimate superpower.

OBEYA HOST



#2 People are committed to engage in continuous improvement, resolving obstacles along the way

Obeya Builders realize that imperfections provide improvement opportunities. Never cover up bad news or white spots, always provide a genuine representation. Obeya Hosts challenge status quo in a disciplined and cyclical rhythm where we try to improve every cycle. Facts and data are vital and empirical evidence builds up along the way.



5.4 Builder & Host Roles & The 11 Principles



Alignment

#3





In the Obeya, we communicate a strong sense of purpose

Obeya Builders ensure purpose is distilled, periodically revised and clearly presented within the Obeya.

An Obeya Hosts refer to purpose and its implications at decisive moments. Purpose is a precondition for a Host to do meaningful work in the Obeya and enables teamwork.



Purpose is recognizably tied to our organizational strategy through meaningful objectives

Obeya Builders exhibit a visual and apparent link between purpose and objectives. Objectives are directional and transformational. Visualizing progress on objectives helps the work of Hosts. Obeya Hosts cultivate understanding between objectives' outcomes, interdependencies and purpose. Hosts identify progress on objectives to accelerate learning and facilitate action.



The Obeya connects strategy to execution with visible orientation on customer experience

Obeya Builders display value creation as experienced by the customer. Clear strategy display benefits operational direction. In turn, work floor experiences provide feedback on strategic priorities. Strategic feasibility gets tested through lessons from execution and customer experiences. Strategy provides operational direction. This is a cycle in which Hosts recognize and activate adjustments on both sides.



The Obeya meetings have a rhythm in sync with the operational heartbeat of the organization

Through meeting rhythms the Obeya creates systemized engagement. Obeya Builders make sure that all governance rhythms have synced timeframes. Obeya Hosts coordinate that Obeya meetings take place at the right time and with the right people. Obeya decisions are recommended to be timely shared with the wider organization.



Workspace







#7 The Obeya visuals provide a logical and practical information and conversation flow

Obeya Builders continuously improve information flow in the Obeya according to feedback from the Obeya Host. Information flow needs to translate into conversation flow.

Visual Management should guide Obeya conversation flow intuitively. Feedback on how the conversation flows is valuable towards Obeya Builders for information flow improvement.



#8 The Obeya reflects a good understanding of the flow of work from start to delivery

Obeya Builders exhibit the process or activities by which value is created, showing how and where different parties contribute their work into the larger whole. Obeya workspaces need to allow an Obeya Host to invest in a shared understanding of 1) value delivery and its challenges and 2) the impact of workfloor dynamics and practicalities.



#9 The Obeya is an attractive and available area, in proximity to the workfloor

Obeya Builders pay attention to Obeya location, appearance, (smart) tooling and utilities. As a consequence, Obeya budget allocation also needs consideration. Well sustained, often visited & transparent Obeya's work best. Hosts pick up signals where poor Obeya arrangements complicate Obeya results. Obeya Hosts coordinate with Obeya Builders.



Content







#10 In the Obeya, we use analytics-driven-evidence to make business decisions

Obeya Builders organize unambiguous (numerical) evidence. Critical information (data) can be synthesized into categories, whilst also reflecting their relative importance. Obeya Hosts spark the learning process by skillful questioning, advancing insights in (the relation between) statistics. The insights benefit sustainable and inclusive decision making.



#11 Data owners ensure information is easy to consume, readily available, up to date, and visually attractive

Obeya Builders work alongside data owners, removing as much complexity as possible. Data collection is a formalized process that centralizes information in the Obeya. Obeya Hosts improve fit between data (representation) and user needs. Hosts may invite data owners for explanation, building trust needed for organizations to rely on data for decisionmaking.

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Introduction

Meetings... you better love them if you want to stay sane in the realm of organizations. But let's be honest, sometimes they can feel like a broken record, replaying the same old tune. That's where Obeya meetings step in to rewrite the script.

Obeya meetings are not suppossed to be one of your typical run-ofthe-mill gatherings. They have their own rhythm and routine in a way that fosters transparancy, equality and collaboration. But it's not just about following steps; it's about speaking up and truly listening, where every voice adds value.

In this chapter we explore the mechanics of Obeya meetings. As you journey through this chapter, you'll grasp that Obeya meetings aren't just checkboxes on your schedule – they're the hidden key to achieving more with less time and effort.

An Obeya meeting is never meant to come "on-top-of" current meeting structures. It means to replace several of them together thus speeding up decision-making processes and saving valuable time.



From 'oh no, yet another meeting' to 'yes, this really matters'.



The importance of meeting rhythm & routine

We already mentioned that Obeya enables a culture of continuous improvement. Continuous improvement is best achieved in multiple consecutive small steps instead of an approach that aims for a single solution. This is also referred to as 'short-cyclical' way of working. A well-designed meeting rhythm and routine are necessary to nurture this way of working.

Obeya meetings have clear agenda's (routines) and are often timeboxed to allow for informed decisions to be made within accepted time frames.

Well-designed meeting routines require the right amount of structure. A structure that is too rigid can lower group energy, limit conversation depth and produces fixed conversations. Too little structure on the other hand, can lead to unclarity, chaotic meetings and lack of focus. People might feel lost and unsettled to make decisions.





TO LEARN HOW TO RUN AN OBEYA MEETING -CHECK OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL AND THE "OBEYA HOST" TRAINING AVAILABILITIES ON THE OBEYA ASSOCIATION WEBSITE



6.2 Obeya meetings



Different kind of meetings in the Obeya

- There can be different kind of meetings in an Obeya. Often you can roughly divide them in strategical, tactical and operational meetings.
- Obeya rooms have iterative meeting rhythms. Different kind of meetings can have different iteration rhythms.
- Strategically oriented meetings can occur every 3 months and could take all day.
- The timespan between two tactical Obeya meeting iterations is shorter (1 or 2 weeks). A tactical Obeya meeting usually takes 1,5 hrs.
- Daily (operational) team stand-ups in the Obeya should take no longer than 30 minutes.
- Regularly (i.e. 1x per month) time is allocated to see if there is room for improvement within the quality of the sessions themselves.



An Obeya meeting is never meant to come "on-top-of" current meeting structures. It means to replace several of them together thus speeding up decision-making processes and saving valuable time.



Examples of an meeting routine and an Obeya improvement meeting

Bi-weekly tactical Obeya agenda

- Solve blockages / impediments
- Discuss updates on Portfolio and Change agenda and create action points
- Discuss (progress on) BHAG
- Discuss Production results and suggestions for performance improvements
- Potential deep dive on specific theme
- Celebrate successes!
- Short retrospective on meeting quality

Bi-monthly Obeya improvement meeting

- How can we improve our way of work in the Obeya?
- How can we solve blockages / impediments faster?
- How can we better set up (and control) our Change agenda?
- How can we get access to better information and how to visualize information better in the Obeya?
- How can we celebrate our successes better?
- How can we improve ownership and communication on results?
- How to create supportive and constructive behaviour in the Obeya?



THESE MEETINGS ARE IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION THAT FUEL IMPROVEMENT DIRECTIONS FOR THE OBEYA BUILDER AND HOST

6.3 Obeya meeting routines / agenda



A few examples of 'Leading With Obeya' meeting routines

Deliver Value routine

Solve problems Routine

- · See and learn if we are meeting our delivery objectives
- Respond to change
- Identify & monitor improvements
- Attendees: Obeya Builders / Hosts, senior sponsor, Po's, (program) managers, scrum masters

DELIVER VALUE ROUTINE

Rhythm: Wednesdays 13:30 - 15:00 uneven weeks

Leadership Team + Coach + Programme Mgrs

Goal

To see and learn if we are meeting our delivery intentions, respond to change and to identify & monitor resolution of

problems

Check-in · Everybody present and focused? Things we should know

about? Shall we use last meeting's improvements now?

Bi-weekly 1-2 hrs

•	Structured approach for solving
	defined improvement projects

- Attendees: Obeya Host,
- designated improvement project leaders
- According to Kata routine, could also be ad-hoc

SOLVE PROBLEMS ROUTINE

Rhythm: 2x 15 minutes per week

Mentor & Improver

es you have created a staryboard and started with the improvement kata

Act & Respond Routine

- Act & respond to operational changes (and problems / impediments!)
- Following up on relevant actions Senior sponsor
- Monitor improvements
- Attendees: Obeya Builders / Hosts, Leadership team, managers
- 2x p/week 30 min



Goal Act & respond to operational changes, requests and problems, while following up on relevant actions

Check-in · Everybody present and focused? Things we should know about before we start? Shall we use last meeting's improvements?

Inbox Which new impediments must we solve?

· Which requests must we address?

Ongoing activities

 Perperson Are we able to solve our existing problems and requests in acceptable time? Where is help needed? Are there any developments our team or other teams must be informed about?

Close

- Did we follow the routine and was that effective? Summarize any decisions and actions.
- Schedule follow-up discussions
- Communicate outcome up and downstream

At this area we see, learn and act. But we don't talk about content for more than 2 minutes.



The book 'Leading with OBEYA' by Tim Wiegel can provide you with good ideas on how to shape your meeting routine.



Problems • Which new problems are impeding progress? (e.g. Quality. Cost or Delivery(time)) How must we address these problems?

Have we been able to solve the problems addressed earlier?

Changes and Lessons Learned

- Per programme / project / team: What has changed in our delivery plan since our last meeting?
 - Do we grasp its consequences and impact on risks? How must we respond to this change?
 - · What have we learned in the last period?
 - Update pitch
- Three minutes of key updates per stream Close
- Did we follow the routine and was that effective?
- Summarize any decisions and actions
 Schedule follow-up discussions
- · Communicate up and downstream

At this wall we see, learn and act. But we don't talk about content for more than 5 minutes.

Mentor questions to improver (use the coaching kata card): What is your Target condition?

- · What is your Actual condition now?
- · What Obstacles do you think are preventing you from reaching the target condition? Which one are you addressing now?
 - → reflect on progress 1. What did you plan as your Last Step?
 - 2. What did you Expect?
 - 3. What Actually Happened?
 - 4. What did you Learn?
- · What is your Next Step? (next experiment) What do you expect? · How quickly can we go and see what we have learned from taking that
- Download the meeting routines on: https://leadingwithobeya.com/downloads



A performance dialogue is essential to reach goals together

In an Obeya, a performance dialogue is a discussion or meeting that focuses on the performance of a team or project. It is an opportunity for team members to review progress, share updates, and identify any issues or challenges that need to be addressed in order to achieve their goals.

In an Obeya performance dialogue, there are several key elements that typically occur. These include:

- **Reviewing progress:** This involves reviewing the progress made towards the team's goals since the last performance dialogue. This may involve reviewing data or metrics, such as project milestones, productivity, or customer satisfaction.
- Sharing updates: Team members may share updates on their work, including any challenges or successes they have experienced.
- Identifying issues: The team may identify any issues or challenges that are impacting their ability to perform effectively. This may include resource constraints, technical problems, or other barriers to progress.
- **Brainstorming solutions:** The team may work together to brainstorm potential solutions to any identified issues.
- Assigning action items: The team may decide on specific action items or tasks that need to be completed in order to address any issues and make progress towards their goals.
- **Reviewing action items:** The team may review the action items that were assigned in the previous performance dialogue to ensure that they have been completed or are on track to be completed.
- Setting goals: The team may set new goals or targets for the next performance dialogue period.

Overall, the goal of a performance dialogue in an Obeya is to ensure that the team is working effectively and efficiently towards their goals, and to identify and address any issues or challenges that may be hindering their progress.



A performance dialogue is about achieving goals together.



An Obeya performance dialogue is about deviations from the norm/standard

Obeya has many visual cues for its attendees to recognize when things are not working according to plan. 'Not according to plan' means operational performance, change agenda's etc. are deviating from set norms or standards.

Signalling colors red and green are used to show where attention is needed.

Red doesn't mean someone did a bad job; it means the system is not delivering what we would expect and that we should investigate. When this happens we often call this an impediment or blockage.

Sometimes blockages/impediments are not visible in the Obeya through the visual management system. They can be noticed and brought up by:

- Obeya attendees
- Other departments
- Clients
- Suppliers
- Other stakeholders

For an Obeya to work it is important that all relevant things that keep us from performing according to plan are communicated.



Red doesn't mean someone did a bad job; it means the system is not delivering what was expected and the item should be investigated.



Conversational maturity

In an Obeya many perspectives and information sources are involved in limited timeframes. It is very different from a chat at the coffee machine or even a regular meeting. All participants need to be mindful of their contributions.





Mindset, behavior and discipline

Obeya is all about doing. A perfect Obeya without people with the right mindset, putting it to use, is just a waste of space. But to get value out of your Obeya, you will need to put in some work first and maybe even change old habits. At times, especially in the beginning, discipline will be required.

Most people don't like to change behaviors. And certainly nobody likes being changed by others. We would advise not to forget the behavioral change part of the Obeya build process. And to discuss desired Obeya behavior in full transparency. A healthy way to approach what an Obeya needs in terms of behavior starts with being aware of what factors are in play when it comes to changing behavior. The schedule on the next page provides you with grip on this process.

How to change from A to B

Starting with Obeya is more than creating an Obeya Room. Often it means a radical change in decision making, introducing new processes, software tooling and ways of working. This 'surface current of change' is necessary, but not enough to truly invoke behavioural change as well.

A change from the current state ('A') to a desired situation ('B'), can only be succesful if people make a transition in mindset & behaviour as well. This 'undercurrent of change' always follows a number of distinct phases, can be observed, predicted and can therefore also be managed.

Without a clear vision on why the Obeya is needed, there will not be any motivation, urgency or reason to truly change. This will only happen when the desired situation ('B') is chrystal clear in terms of specific and observable behaviour. Which is why it is important to formulate your Obeya Purpose as a starting point on your Obeya journey.



The book 'Systemic Transition Management' by Maaike Thiecke & Bianca van Leeuwen can provide insights on dealing with the psychological aspects of change.



From experience:

New things are often exciting, but also means leaving some old things behind. There is some "pain" in transitioning from A to B. Upfront and transparent conversations about what's likely to get left behind can smoothen inconveniences later in the process.

PAGE





Introduction

Obeya is a space where change unpretentiously takes center stage. Starting with Obeya isn't solely about adopting a new tool; it's about sparking a ripple effect of transformation, ushering in shifts in behavior, upgrades in output, and fostering better collaboration.

However, before diving in headfirst and expecting everyone else to follow suit effortlessly, keep in mind that the process isn't always a smooth ride. You might encounter a few bumps along the way – those moments of crossed arms indicating defensive or oppositional behavior, and the occasional off-the-shelf confusion about what to do next. But remember, even these twists contribute to the success of implementing and utilizing Obeya.

Here's the scoop: Obeya isn't a one-time makeover. It's a living entity that evolves with your organization. In a world that's perpetually changing, Obeya becomes your compass for navigating challenges with finesse, celebrating successes with enthusiasm, and mastering the art of agility in an ever-moving world.



Obeya: Where change finds its stage. Often without you knowing it!



An organization can be effectively aligned with an obeya when 3 rhythms are combined into fast decision cycles and accellerated learning



STRATEGICAL RHYTHM (i.e. quarterly)

- True North
- Explain Vision
- Long term Alignment
- Customer Focus
- Empowerment
- Seize Opportunities
- Transparency
- Stability

2 TACTICAL RHYTHM (i.e. biweekly)

- Data Driven Decisions
- Problem Solving
- Coaching
- Information Collection & Distribution
- Short Term Partnering
- Capacity Management
- Roles & Responsibilities

3 OPERATIONAL RHYTHM (i.e. daily)

- Manage Workload
- Rapid Iteration & Experimentation
- Deliver & improve Tangible Results
- Teambuilding
- Knowledge Management
- Data Collection
- Conflict Resolvement



A responsive Obeya system connects strategy to execution





Large organizations use a network of Obeya rooms

An Obeya can be built out into a network of rooms within larger organizations. You can work with physical rooms, digital rooms like or create a hybrid combination. Physical advantages can often be found when human connection is needed. A digital network of rooms has advantages in cascading information when the rooms are all connected.



Source: iObeya



SURFACE CURRENT OF CHANGE

EXAMPLES:





An Obeya can be initiated from different parts of the organization

Obeya's for different purposes are likely to get initiated by different parts of the organization. Aiming for improvement in the value creation process probably leads to Obeya initiation on the workfloor, whereas programs regarding the cultural values of the whole organization are likely to get initiated by leadership. Issues regarding departmental cooperation ask for horizontally oriented Obeya.





Starting with Obeya: fast or slow?

When it comes to changing from one way of work to another, there will be some level of change management required. As people work in a system that wants to return back to its status quo, it can pay off to consider your strategy: fast or slow. They both have their own (dis) advantages.





Start small, build on success

- + Experience together what works successfully and what doesn't work
- + Oil slick effect
- Two systems working alongside each other can create friction
- Takes longer / more discipline needed to get results



An example of how you could start with your Obeya

Underneath an example of how you could approach setting up an Obeya. This example clearly shows the choice of first figuring out higher level, strategic direction, before getting into a rhythm involving teams/departments and connecting strategy and execution.



From experience:

Starting is more important than getting it right. You will never get it exactly right! It is about engaging in an iterative process where your latest experience shows you the way forward. The only real mistake you can make is wait...





Obeya is a reflection of your organization: never finished and always continues to evolve.



The ideal situation

In an Obeya you engage in participatory dialogue and experience psychological safety. In a relatively short timeframe information is transformed to learnings and then action/decisions are taken.

Decisions are factbased and committed. Having all relevant stakeholders present saves time in updating each other later.

There is a sense of connection and people get together behind a common goal. Successes are celebrated and problems quickly arrive at the level they need to be dealt with.

The meeting is structured and every perspective is honored. Feedback is provided and healthy friction is allowed to exist.

The Obeya meeting is positive and people are curious.

Conversation issues

There are a few common issues that prevent participatory dialogue and psychological safety from happening:

- Dominant people take over the meeting
- Time wasted on only updating each other
- Not everyone participates
- No action (too much reflection)
- Quick fixes (too little reflection)
- (personal) judgements
- (unchecked) assumptions
- Fears and limiting beliefs
- Unskillful disagreements
- Decisional powerplay
- Low data confidence

General issues

There are a few common issues that prevent an Obeya meeting from running smooth even when the conversation is constructive.

- Data/information is not updated
- Data too high level to act
- Data too detailed (confusion)
- People are late
- People not present
- People are unprepared
- Messy Obeya room
- Technical malfunctions
- Lack of leadership involvement

From experience:

An Obeya exposes many things. At times you might experience a feeling that your Obeya is "wrong" or "unfinished". But actually: you might be moving in the RIGHT direction. Creating transparency on what's NOT there is an equally important part of the process. It is one of the problems that you can now solve.

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SOURCES & BOOK

8.1 SOURCES & BOOK SUGGESTIONS



While we have designed this module based on our own experiences and the knowledge provided by the Obeya Association network, we have learned much from these amazing authors and their works. The content that the Obeya Association provides is constantly revised, updated and enriched. We highly recommend reading these works to get a deeper understanding of Obeya Fundamentals.

Obeya

- Leading with Obeya, Tim Wiegel, de Vrije Uitgevers (2021) (includes meeting routines)
- Everyone Obeya (Dutch), Jeroen Janssen, Jeroen Janssen (2019)
- The Collaboration Equation, Jim Benson, Modus Cooperandi, Inc (2022)

Obeya meetings

• W.A.I.T. Oisin Grogan (2016)

Starting with Obeya

- Systemic Transition Management. Take the easy road for a change! Maaike Thiecke and Bianca van Leeuwen (2017)
- Coaching Agile Teams, Lyssa Adkins (2010)

Obeya History

- Why Obeya is more than a Visual Management tool, Tim Wolput (2022)
- The new new product development game, Hirotaka Takeuchi and Ikujiro Nonaka (1986)
- The machine that changed the world, James P. Womack, Daniel T. Jones and Daniel Roos (1990)
- The analects of Confusius (475 221 BC)
- The secret history of Agile Innovation, Darrell Rigby, Jeff Sutherland and Hirotaka Takeuchi (2016)
- SCRUM development process, Ken Schwaber (1995)
- Statistical method from the viewpoint of Quality Control, W. A. Shewhart (1939)



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