

Case Study: Implementing Kanban at a Fortune 500 Company

Client Context

A global Fortune 500 company, operating across multiple time zones, was facing challenges with **work visibility, inconsistent throughput, and bottlenecks** in delivering high-priority tasks. The organization engaged ZetaMu Consulting to implement the **Kanban method** to improve workflow transparency, optimize delivery, and build a culture of continuous improvement.

Objectives of the Kanban Engagement

1. Provide foundational understanding of Kanban principles and practices.
 2. Establish a **visual management system** for work tracking.
 3. Identify and remove bottlenecks to improve flow efficiency.
 4. Introduce **metrics for continuous improvement**.
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Engagement Roadmap

Phase 1 – Kickoff & Training

- Delivered a **3-day workshop** on Kanban principles:
 - Visualize work
 - Limit WIP (Work In Progress)
 - Manage flow
 - Make policies explicit
 - Implement feedback loops
 - Improve collaboratively
- Aligned leadership and delivery teams on Kanban's role in their workflow.

Phase 2 – Workflow Mapping

- Partnered with teams to **map current workflows**.
- Identified value streams and defined **WIP limits** for each stage.

Phase 3 – Board Design & Implementation

- Built and deployed a **digital Kanban board** for distributed teams.
- Enabled real-time visibility into priorities and status.

Phase 4 – Metrics & Feedback Loops

- Introduced **lead time, cycle time, and throughput tracking**.
- Implemented daily Kanban standups and service delivery reviews.

Phase 5 – Continuous Improvement

- Facilitated monthly retrospectives.
 - Ran quarterly **service delivery assessments** to refine workflows.
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Key Kanban Principles Applied

- **Visualize the workflow** for transparency.
- **Limit WIP** to improve focus and throughput.

- **Manage flow** to ensure smooth delivery.
 - **Make policies explicit** to set shared expectations.
 - **Implement feedback loops** for rapid adaptation.
 - **Improve collaboratively** using data-driven insights.
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Outcomes & Benefits

- Reduced **task lead time by an average of 30%**.
 - Increased throughput **without increasing team size**.
 - Enhanced collaboration across distributed teams through **real-time board visibility**.
 - Faster identification and resolution of bottlenecks.
 - Established a **sustainable culture of continuous improvement**.
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Key Takeaways

- Kanban improves predictability without mandating large process overhauls.
- Visual management fosters accountability and transparency.
- WIP limits help maintain focus and quality.
- Metrics enable **evidence-based decision-making** for improvement.