

Leader standard work supports problem solvers

Run an observable leader routine that develops the issue owner, removes a support barrier and verifies an overdue commitment instead of merely completing calendar checks.



A completed walk, an unfinished commitment

Fictional assembly-team case: supervisor Imani visits every work area each morning but personally supplies answers and fixes missing materials. Team member Leo waits for her instructions. Yesterday he agreed to test a clearer kit-ready signal; the board now marks the action done, although a kit again arrived without its readiness check.

Your role and the reference condition

Supervisor coaching the team owner, with a materials manager available to resolve a cross-team barrier. Normal: The leader routine connects actual work, response, coaching and verification. Team ownership survives the conversation; leaders supply support that the owner cannot provide alone.

Gap: The calendar is complete and the action box is green, but no one has checked whether the change worked.

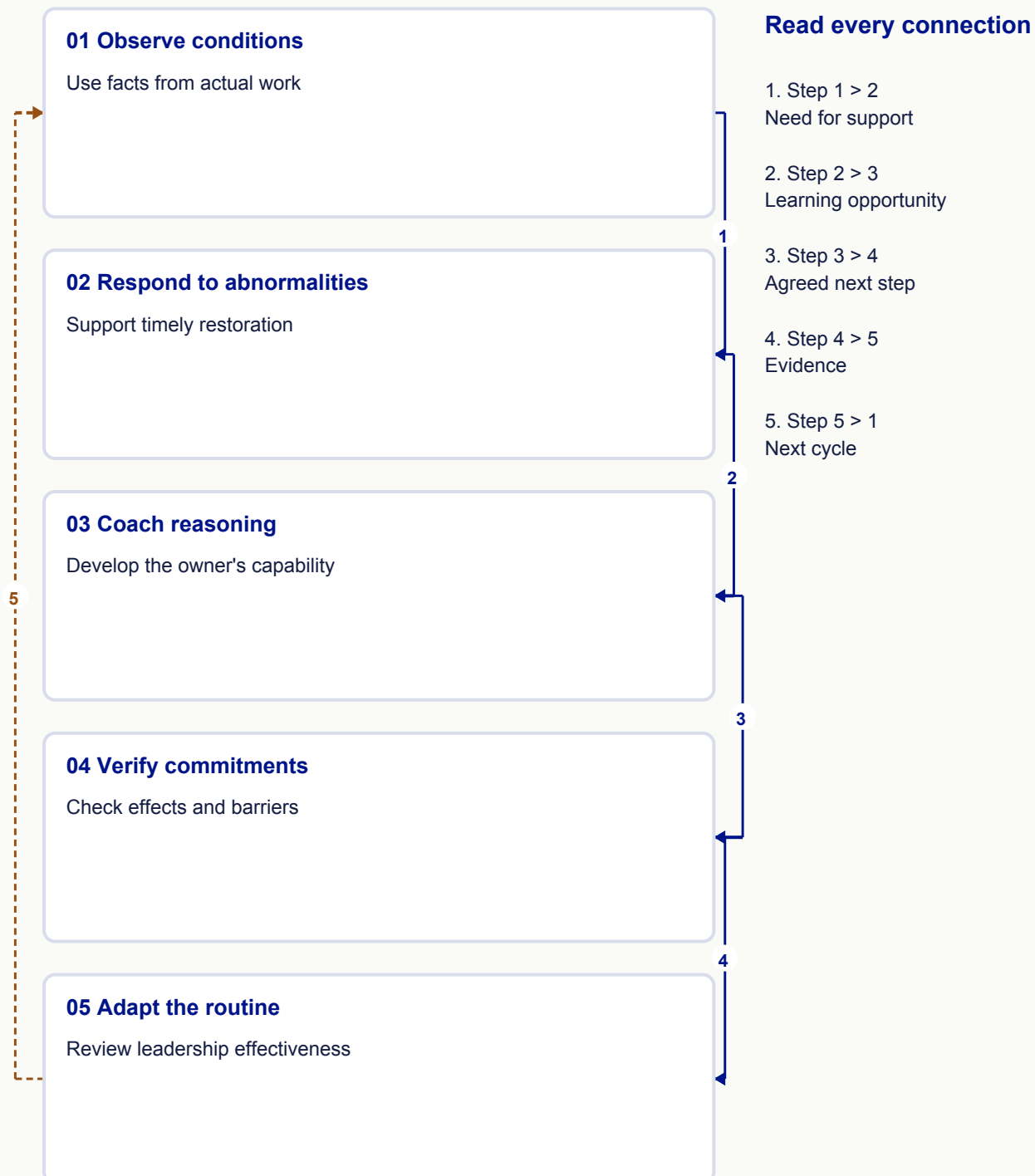
Work within these conditions

1. The leader responds to immediate safety, quality or delivery needs through the normal authority before coaching at length.
2. Times below are a fictional teaching rhythm, not a universal prescribed daily schedule.

Fictional teaching case. Supplied observations support the exercise; proposed actions are not verified customer results.

See how the method works

Leaders need a repeatable way to support the work and develop problem solvers. Choose routines for observing conditions, responding to abnormalities, coaching reasoning and checking commitments. Make the timing and responsibility clear while leaving room to respond to real events. During coaching, ask the owner to explain the gap and evidence rather than taking over the solution. Review whether the routine removes obstacles and strengthens capability. A completed calendar is not the result. Different leadership levels have different work: a supervisor supports the immediate process, while a manager often removes barriers crossing several teams or functions.



Connected method map: Observe conditions, Respond to abnormalities, Coach reasoning, Verify commitments, Adapt the routine. Every authored connection is shown with a numbered arrow and named legend.

Follow the evidence and decisions

Inspect the supplied case inputs

Time / record	Supplied fictional evidence
Yesterday 15:00	Leo: test kit-ready signal before next morning
Today 07:00 board	Action marked done; no result attached
07:10 at work	Kit K42 arrived without readiness check
Leo's explanation	I put the sign up; replenishment team did not know what to mark
Support barrier	Shared signal crosses two supervisors' teams
Verification opportunity	Next planned replenishment at 10:00

01 / Use the board to choose an observation

At 07:00 Imani sees that the completed action has no evidence and chooses to observe the next kit handoff. She asks Leo what the change was expected to achieve.

Why: The board is a prompt for learning at the work, not a substitute for it. A green box is a status assertion that needs a reference.

Evidence / check: Leo's prediction is explicit: incoming kits should show a completed readiness check before acceptance.

02 / Respond to the actual gap

At 07:10 the team follows the current approved process for K42 while Imani records the missing check. She avoids treating a coaching conversation as permission to bypass the existing control.

Why: Customer/work protection and learning must both be addressed. An experiment does not suspend the current requirement.

Evidence / check: K42's response follows the existing standard; the missing readiness signal is recorded as observed.

03 / Coach the owner's reasoning

Imani asks: What did you predict? What happened? What did you learn? Leo identifies that posting the sign did not establish who marks it. He proposes testing the handoff with the replenishment owner.

Why: Supplying the final design herself would keep Leo dependent. The questions expose the gap between an installed object and an operating routine.

Evidence / check: Leo retains the next-step ownership and names the untested role agreement.

04 / Remove the barrier at the right level

Imani arranges a short discussion with the materials supervisor because Leo cannot assign another team's work. The two owners agree a bounded 10:00 handoff trial, required acknowledgment and observer.

Why: Coaching does not mean withholding managerial help. Cross-team authority is the leader's contribution; the team still owns its reasoning and test.

Evidence / check: Commitment L17 names Leo, the replenishment counterpart, the prediction and 10:15 review.

05 / Verify and adapt the rhythm

At 10:15 the leader asks for the observed handoff result before changing status. At the weekly reflection she checks whether her routine finds weak handoffs and develops owners, then adjusts observation focus as needed.

Why: The actual outcome, not attendance or a revised due date, determines whether to adopt, adapt or continue learning.

Evidence / check: The completed planning record leaves future trial results unfilled; closure requires the later observation and owner explanation.

Commitment L17 - ownership and verification are explicit

Rhythm point	Owner / action	Evidence / decision
07:00 board	Imani asks for prediction	Done label lacks result; observe
07:10 at work	Leo responds to K42 gap	Missing readiness mark recorded
07:20 coaching	Leo proposes role-agreement trial	Prediction differs from installed sign
Before 10:00	Imani secures materials support	Named counterpart accepts test
10:15 review	Leo reports observed handoff	Result still pending; no automatic closure
Weekly reflection	Imani reviews her routine	Check follow-through and owner capability

The review is overdue again

At 10:15 Leo reports that the replenishment counterpart was reassigned and the trial did not occur. The board is still green because the sign remains installed.

Decision

Change the commitment to trial not completed, retain Leo's ownership and escalate the unprovided support to the materials manager. Agree a realistic next observation rather than declaring the idea ineffective.

Reasoning

No trial means no evidence about the proposed method. The missed support commitment is itself a leadership-system issue.

What would change the decision?

Record the failed prerequisite, receiving manager, new commitment and its verification point; do not fabricate a trial result.

Practise with a changed case

An office reminder has not changed the handoff

New fictional service team: owner Mara installed a reminder for request handoff. At review, two requests still lack a receiving acknowledgment. Mara says she can make the reminder larger. The receiving team has never agreed who confirms receipt, and its supervisor has not joined the trial.

Fact	Evidence
Target	Each handoff has an identified receiver and acknowledgment
Implemented	Reminder posted
Observed	Two requests without acknowledgment
Missing prerequisite	Receiving role agreement
Leader authority	Can convene the other supervisor; cannot invent results

Your task

1. Write two coaching questions that expose prediction versus observation.
2. Complete a commitment naming owner, leader support, trial and review evidence.
3. State the response if the other supervisor again does not provide the agreed support.

Use the next page to record your reasoning before reading the answer.

Your practice worksheet

An office reminder has not changed the handoff

Current condition / predicted change

Owner's next experiment

Leader's support commitment

Review time and evidence

Overdue or failed-prerequisite response

Complete your reasoning before turning to the answer. Use the separate learner workbook for group practice.

Check your reasoning and transfer it

1. Ask what Mara expected a reminder to change and what the two requests show about the handoff. A larger reminder is a proposed solution, not evidence that the missing role agreement is resolved.
2. Mara can own a small test with an identified receiver. The leader owns convening the counterpart and securing the role agreement; review actual acknowledgments for the test requests.
3. If support is missing, mark the test not performed and escalate that barrier. Do not blame the owner for an untested method or move the due date without an accountable response.

Suggested completed record

Commitment	Responsible role / point	Action / verification
Owner	Mara	Test agreed handoff on a bounded request set
Leader support	Convene receiving supervisor	Confirm receiver and acknowledgment rule
Review	After agreed test window	Observe request identity and acknowledgment
Support absent	Trial not performed	Escalate; retain record and ownership

Plausible wrong turns

1. A completed walk does not establish effective leadership.
2. Coaching is not abandonment, and supporting the owner does not require taking over every solution.

Evidence of a sound answer

1. Use an evidence-seeking question rather than a disguised instruction.
2. Separate owner action from leader support.
3. Define observable verification and a credible overdue response.

Take the learning back to work

Commitment	Agreed follow-through
Owner	Team leader and each named issue owner; next-level leader for cross-team barriers
Record	Leader routine plus commitment/evidence log
Review	At agreed daily verification points and weekly reflection on the routine
Verification evidence	Observed response, owner reasoning, supplied support and verified commitments
If unresolved	Escalate the specific barrier and adapt the routine; preserve honest status instead of measuring success by calendar completion.

Help someone else apply the method

Prepare

1. L17 commitment record
2. Two role cards for leader and owner
3. Practice handoff evidence; separate answer

Minutes	Activity and coaching prompt
4	Contrast activity with outcome What did the green box actually prove?
8	Role-play the worked conversation Ask a question that leaves Leo doing the thinking.
9	Pairs practise Mara's case What support belongs to the leader?
6	Debrief overdue response Was the test unsuccessful, or was it never performed?

Debrief

1. If the leader dictates a solution, replay the exchange using the owner's prediction and evidence.
2. If no support is offered, identify the cross-team authority the owner lacks.

Individual or remote practice

Write both sides of a short conversation, then highlight owner reasoning, leader support and verification separately.

Connect the method and check its boundaries

Before application

1. Defined leader scope
2. Time to coach and respond

Outside this lesson

1. Calendar completion is not effectiveness
2. Leader must not take over every problem

LEI: Leader Standard Work

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Gemba, reflection, andon response, accountability and mentoring

Method reference; original OPEX scenario and diagram are synthetic teaching content, not source case results.

[Open this lesson and its visual aids](#)