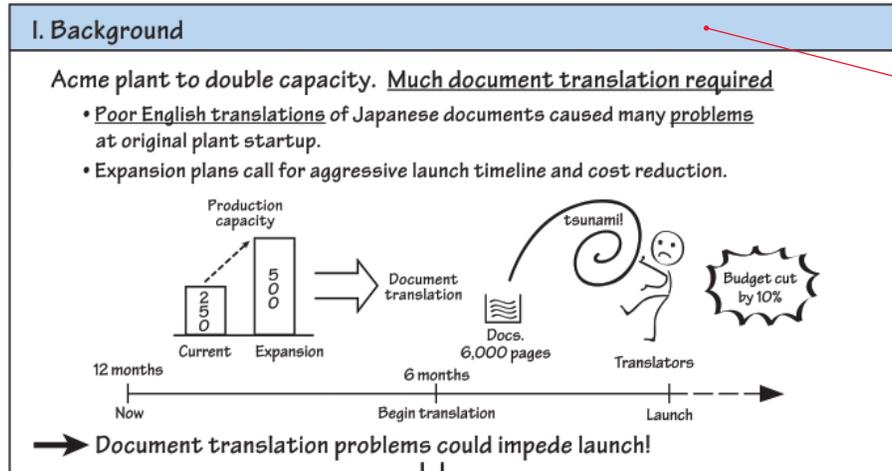


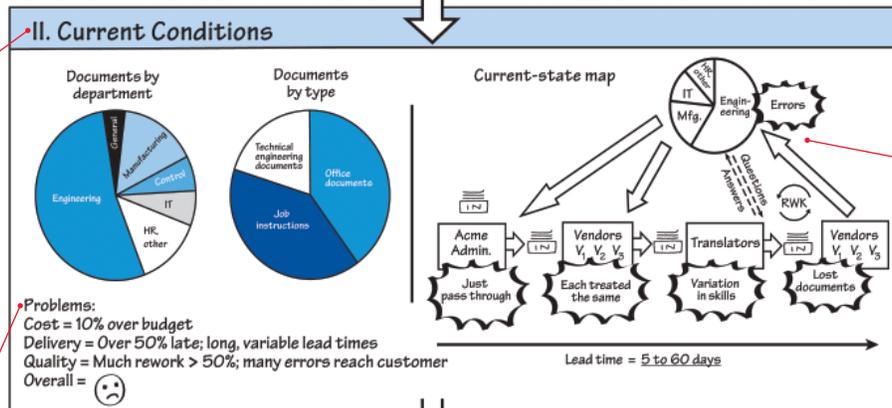
Support Launch Objectives with Accurate, Timely Document Translation

One way to describe the A3 is as “standardized storytelling,” which refers to the ability of A3s to communicate both facts and meaning in a commonly understood format. Like any narrative tale, an A3 tells a complete story, with a beginning, a middle and an end, which can be traced from the upper left-hand side to the lower right side. Because readers are familiar with the format, they can focus easily on the matter contained. It becomes the basis for reaching a shared understanding.



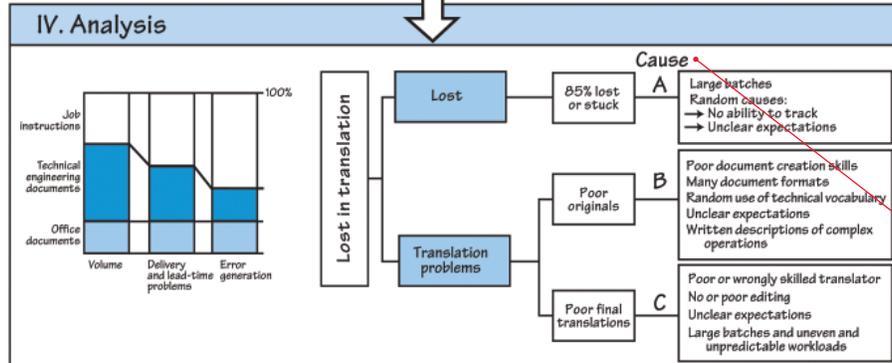
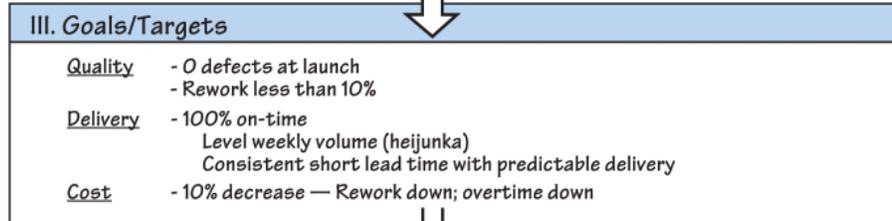
Despite the specific categories used in this A3, there's no one fixed, absolute, correct template. Regardless of the setting or use, it's always the underlying thinking that matters. Every A3 is no more than a visual manifestation of a problem-solving thought process involving continual dialogue between the owner of an issue and others in an organization.

Current conditions are always based on facts derived from the *gemba* — the place where the work takes place. Real facts about the real work are derived from careful investigation on the part of the author.



A3s employ visual methods to share information and thinking. This helps condense key facts into meaningful visual shorthand — storytelling tools that help pack a great deal of data into an elegant presentation.

Defining the problem simply and powerfully represents the most important part of any A3. Effective A3s persuade others by capturing the right story with facts (not abstractions) and communicating the meaning effectively.



A problem is something that presents itself as a barrier to the organization achieving its goal. Articulating this problem requires the author to identify the gap between current state and the desired performance at any given time. The root cause or reason the gap exists is identified through examining the way the work is currently being performed and asking why the problem occurs. If the root cause is clearly defined, effective countermeasures can more easily be developed.

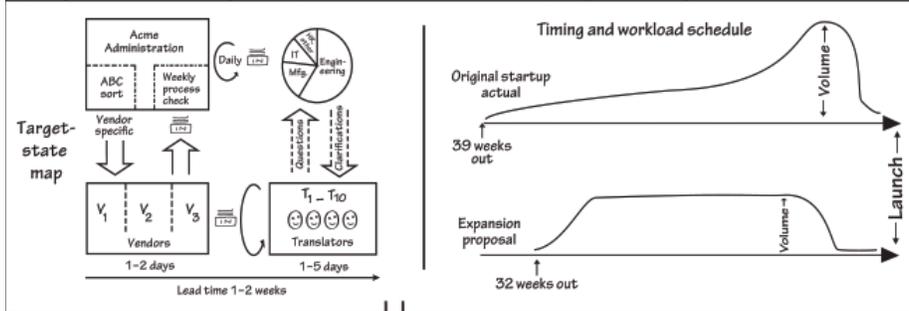
A3 proposals typically use the word "countermeasure" rather than "solution." Countermeasure refers to the way that proposed actions are directly addressed to existing conditions. More importantly, the wording recognizes that even apparent "solutions" inevitably create new problems. Once a countermeasure is in place, it will create a new situation, with its own set of problems that will require their own countermeasures.

		KS 8/8/08	DP 8/7/08
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All A3s include the initials or names of the author and manager. The value of the A3 process to the manager cannot be overemphasized. The manager now has a tool to mentor and establish alignment. The individual now has the means to propose answers to problems that he/she owns, to create authorization to act and to manufacture the authorization needed to see the proposal carried out.

V. Proposed Countermeasures				
Cause	Countermeasure	Description	Benefit	Responsible/support.
A	Central document-flow tracking process	Overall process ownership established Document flow and timing management - Timing control chart; weekly check - Segmentation by document type	Delivery Quality Cost	Porter - Each department - Vendors
B	Standard vocabulary database and templates	Standard terms for processes, equipment tools, work flow across job sites Create standard templates and include photos and videos Gathered from each department, input into database for use by internal document creators and translators	Quality	Administration IT Each department
C	Standard vendor three-step process	Step ① Translation by topic specialist Step ② Rewrite by native English speaker Step ③ Check by highly skilled bilingual	Quality Delivery	Administration - Each vendor - Procurement

The A3s process explores a set of potential countermeasures rather than just one solution. By examining a range of potential choices, individuals uncover a broader and more meaningful basis for dialogue, analysis and agreement.



Note that effective countermeasures can be produced only by speaking with everyone who touches the work. And so producing a viable plan requires meaningful input from everyone.

VI. Plan				
Deliverables	Timeline	Responsible	Support	Review
Overall Launch Timeline				Plant management Committee Japan HQ
Planning	Nema-washi A3 authorized	Administration/ Porter	Each department	
Vendors	Evaluate Bid Select	Procurement Frances	Administration/ Each department	
Document creation - Database and templates - Training - Creating documents	Compile Ongoing updates	Each department - Administration/ Carter - Each department - Each department	Administration/Porter - IT (Rick and Terry) - HR - Administration	Each department Administration/ Sanderson
Document translation management system - Flow segmentation - Traffic control chart	A, B, C sort Weekly check	Administration/ Porter	Each department Ana	Administration/ Sanderson
Midproject review				

Producing a realistic plan through the A3 process shifts the basis of decision making from formal authority to ownership of the problem itself. By developing a mastery of the issue at hand and involving the players in the process, the A3 author earns the authority to propose and move forward an effective plan.

VII. Followup	
Midterm review	Ensure ongoing collaboration
Prelaunch review	Monitor system weekly. All metrics, especially quality and delivery

Every action plan includes a schedule for *hansei*, or reflection, to identify problems, develop new countermeasures and communicate improvements to the rest of the organization. A3s are part of a learning cycle of continuous improvement — which is why a key Toyota saying is, "No problem is a problem."