The delivery operation of the Order Filling department within a Walmart Import Distribution Center will be analyzed.

The objective of the analysis is to determine whether the current process of distributing the delivery assignments strictly based on percentage and allowing order filler department associates to select the order of deliveries is in the most efficient process in supporting their customers, the shipping department. There were 40 order fillers assigned during the shift being analyzed and each delivery included an average of 240 cases. The data was pulled from the Walmart GLS system, order filling management menu and driver history.

The current process for order filling deliveries not customer focused. The shipping department are the customers and cannot load or ship freight until it is delivered by the order fillers; however, the current process prioritizes the order filling department meeting their own productivity goals. At the beginning of the shift the order filling manager and administrative clerks separate the deliveries based on the percentage of freight being delivered to each regional distribution center dock area (6006, 6011, 6017, etc…). Next, they assign a specific number of order filler drivers to each regional center based on their productivity goals and then provide them with the labels of the freight they need to pick in three waves (3 hour periods). Unfortunately, this is where the strategy ends. When the order fillers receive their group of assignments, they choose the order in which to pick and deliver freight and this results in an unbalanced shipping dock. Some areas of the dock become backed up and while others are bare.

The second strategy to improve the order filling process is to eliminate the order fillers receiving large groups of deliveries at one time and provide specific direction on the order of the deliveries for the entire shift. Each order fillers employ their own preferences throughout the entire shift. Some order fillers wait until the end of the night to pick and deliver the larger trips, while some do the opposite. At times the dock is bare and during others times it is overcrowded and freight is delivered into the aisles, in front of exit doors or to the wrong location when there is no room at the correct location. This leads to mis shipped freight (wrong destination), a loss of productivity for the both departments and downtime. If the deliveries were issued in smaller batches the clerks could control the amount of freight on the dock, ensuring each destination has the appropriately work load. Additionally, the managers and clerks would be more proactive versus reactive.

An appointment system is not included in this process and would not be affective due to the order fillers having various productivity rates. When the department is fully staffed, there are 63 associates who are all at different levels of proficiency and progression. The workload of the manager and clerks does not allow an appointment system to be managed without adding additional personnel.

Currently, the order fillers productivity is based on the entire 10 hour shift. Based on the type of freight assigned, the productivity standard is either 1800 or 3000 averaging 2400 cases per shift for 63 personnel. The number of hourly appointments to issue the deliveries would be

The system is not currently pooled, and this is because of the free servers in each queue. Yes, it should be pooled as it will reduce waiting time for the customers and also make sure that each server is fully utilized.