

EMBEDDING A LEAN CULTURE IN INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING

Industrial & Manufacturing Case Study



Organization Profile

Global leader in the provision of pulp screening components and screening systems for the pulp and paper industry. The organization has manufacturing facilities in America, Asia, and Europe.

Project Goals

Institute a culture of continuous improvement that results in positive impact to the value chain for the stakeholders.

Project Timeframe

12 - 24 months

Key Deliverables

Increased employee empowerment, engagement and accountability. Through the delivery of accredited Lean Green and Black Belt programs, employees became directly and actively involved in the process of improvement implementation.

The Leading Edge Group worked with its client to embed a culture of Continuous Improvement across its global manufacturing operations.

The clients' commitment to improving mill practice led to the organization contacting the Leading Edge Group (LEG) to streamline its processes through Lean practices.

The client faced many challenges; stagnant market growth rates, eroding margins due to an increase in raw material costs and labour rates, industry consolidation and new sources of competition. In short, the future was uncertain for organizations that did not have the ability to quickly change and improve their value proposition within the market place and for their stakeholders.

The Leading Edge Group proposed an approach that would immediately add value to the organisation while empowering employees and embedding a continuous improvement culture for long-term sustainability.

As a result of working with LEG, the organization developed an executable roadmap to move from the current state to the desired future state with a number of specific requirements including:

- Reduce cost and lead time with suppliers and other partners
- Develop the competency and efficiency of field services and capital
- Institute a HR process to develop and manage talent
- Improve lead time of R&D (from idea to product launch)
- Embed continuous improvement as a core business process

"The Leading Edge Group's training in our facility has had tremendous positive impact. One of our greatest challenges, new product manufacturing, is showing clear signs of positive development. We've improved margins, reduced lead time, increased capacity and reduced floor space. We've also had other successes, some minor, some greater. People are very happy with the results of our Lean initiative". (Director of Operations)

How was the project implemented?

As a critical first step, LEG delivered a Lean Executive Overview workshop to senior management to introduce the leadership team to Lean Thinking and its benefits. The event covered an introduction to Lean, its principles, appropriate implementation, and associated benefits. Getting buy-in at the top is vital for implementation and sustainability. Also, it is important that senior management are proficient in the language and principles of Lean to facilitate communication and evaluation.

16 hand-picked staff then undertook a blended Lean Green Belt Program aimed at achieving competency and confidence in the effective application of Lean Thinking to the organizational context. The blended program consisted of 7-days' in-house training led by a LEG Senior Lean facilitator which complemented online access to program lessons, mentoring support, Lean resources, and a Lean discussion forum.

As part of their Green Belt certification, participants undertook projects that focused on using the Lean tools and practices covered in the program to initiate and implement improvements in the facility. The program therefore gained an immediate "win" and delivered a Return on Investment, both important to on-going program support at Board Level. At the individual level, staff members gained a recognized qualification, could leverage the content taught in a practical setting, saw immediate results and gained positive feedback. Initiating this cycle of positive re-inforcement is key to ongoing engagement.

Finally, LEG detailed current processes in an "as is" map that identified areas of waste and inefficiency, described the ideal future in a "to be" map and outlined the human and technical resources required to achieve the ideal state in a business requirements and development roadmap.

Frequently Used Terms

Term	Description
Continuous Improvement	The act of enhancing the deliverable value to the customer by evaluating and improving the organization's products, services or processes on a continuous basis.
Lead Time	The overall time it takes to provide or deliver a product or service.
Blended Belt	A Lean Belt program delivered through a combination of both classroom and online components.

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