

Case study



> NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 20

Smurfit Kappa leader looking the full package



The Challenge

Smurfit Kappa Machine Systems

is a manufacturing business which specialises in the design, manufacture and repair of bespoke packaging equipment.

The Bristol-based company, whose client base includes Kellogg's and Weetabix, had benefited from working with the MAS in the past, having completed a two-day lean workshop which addressed operational costs and delivery lead times. The MAS had introduced the team to the fundamentals of lean manufacturing and helped them improve productivity, workplace organisation and the flow of material and information around the business.

Following on from this project, the senior management team wanted to develop its production manager's leadership skills so he could run the shop floor in a more efficient way, and learn how to lead and manage better in a pressurised manufacturing environment.

“ *The knowledge and experience I gained from working alongside the MAS specialist has been really beneficial, and the Operational Leadership Programme has definitely improved my skills in getting the best from our staff. It's a development programme which lasted ten weeks, but will stay with me for the rest of my life.* ”

Mark Hill, Production Manager, Smurfit Kappa Machine Systems





How MAS helped...

The MAS recommended its Operational Leadership Programme (OLP) – a ten week programme which helps build the leadership qualities of front-line managers. The OLP consists of formal training sessions plus in-company coaching. Delegates are also required to manage and deliver a work-based project that enables them to put their skills into practice.

Smurfit Kappa's production manager, Mark Hill, had recently taken on the responsibility for the on-site modifications team. On-site modifications involve Smurfit Kappa upgrading or modifying packaging machines on a customer's premises to accommodate new products and packaging.

Mark quickly identified an opportunity to apply his newly acquired skills from the OLP to improve the service, quality and costs of the on-site modification offering. Fundamental to the OLP, is the desire to help managers take personal responsibility for improving their business, so Mark was encouraged to address his team's performance and see how he could lead them more effectively. The MAS specialist coached him throughout the ten weeks, providing input and objective feedback.

“ *The pressures of running a modern-day manufacturing business extend to more than just lean. Managers have to look after suppliers, materials and machines, whilst also having to improve their own capabilities, people and processes. Where the real challenge lies is in bringing about sustained change and improvements through good leadership skills, and this is where a programme, such as the OLP, is of great benefit on the factory floor.* ”

Phil Townsend, MAS specialist



The results

The confidence and ability of the production manager to lead and manage the team increased dramatically, with overall team working and communication between the service and manufacturing sides of the business, much improved.

The on-site modification service has seen a 20 per cent increase in productivity, resulting in improved service levels and enhanced customer relationships.



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