



**YORKSHIRE  
PRODUCTIVITY**

“...driving manufacturing excellence...”



## Case Study

### Customised Packaging Ltd — Lean In Action



Customised Packaging Ltd. (CPL) designs and manufactures specialised returnable packaging for industrial and retail applications.

Often irregularly shaped or designed to very specific customer requirements, the packaging is used mainly in instances where regular repeat shipments of the same item are made.

For example, CPL produces packaging for several multi-national automotive manufacturers who need to ship parts of specific sizes and shapes.

Savings are made on waste, as packaging is not disposed of after first use, but used repeatedly.

By the time the packaging has been used just three times, the economic benefits over disposable packaging are realised.

The returnable packaging saves on transit damage, is easier for the operator to use and avoids waste disposal costs. Customers of Customised Packaging Ltd. include major companies such as Honda, Aston Martin and Toyota.



#### The drive for Lean

Some years ago, the Manchester company now known as Customised Packaging Ltd. was owned by Linpac and faced an uncertain future.

A buyout team of Graham Lord and Shiraz Qurashi could see the potential of operating Customised Packaging as a viable and successful company.

Two years ago, they arranged a management buyout which saved 20 jobs at the Denton company.



**“Like many other small companies that operate in a highly competitive global market, we needed to invest in our people and our machinery to ensure we were producing as efficiently and effectively as possible,” explained Managing Director, Graham Lord.**

Graham had some awareness of lean manufacturing from his Linpac days



and identified a need to improve team working and process flow as their first steps along the lean journey.



#### Identifying priorities

Yorkshire Productivity first started working with CPL in August 2006 on a programme which includes diagnosis, training and implementation.

There are two main sides to the manufacturing process at CPL— ‘extrusion and moulding’, followed by ‘assembly.’



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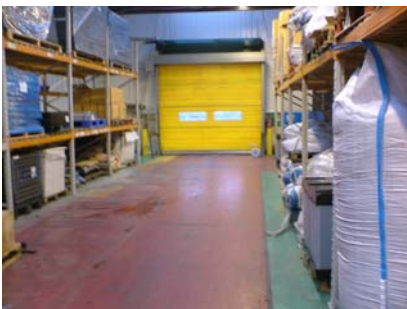


Because of the extensive use of machinery in the 'extrusion and moulding' process, it has made sense for the staff in this part of the business to spend time understanding and introducing Total Productive Maintenance (TPM).

The goal of TPM is to eliminate downtime and improve machine reliability.

In 'assembly', on the other hand, a priority has been to concentrate on Process Flow Analysis.

About half of the workforce, including supervisors and operators have been involved in Process Flow Analysis—measuring downtime and looking at wastes.



'Process Flow' is a practical tool to enable the achievement of productivity gains in an organisation through the elimination of waste.

Process Flow Analysis highlights Value Added and Non-Value Added activities and uses questioning techniques and Process Flow Mapping Charts to identify opportunities for improvement and waste elimination.

CPL is already seeing a clear improvement in flow. A particular area has been identified and set aside as a completed goods area. Through better organisation, redesign and use of racking, efficiency has improved and the area is much easier to use.

The introduction of 5s has been key to much of the progress that has been made.

The principle of 5s is that if everything is kept in a clean and orderly state, efficiency and productivity will improve.

5s has been adapted from a Japanese concept and stands for: Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardise and Sustain.

Regular 5S audits are now in place to ensure that these improvements are sustained.

### Lean qualifications

**"I am convinced that 'lean' is the only way forward," said Graham.**

**"Within a relatively small company, it is not always easy to make time for the training and organisational changes required, but the potential benefits far outweigh the pain."**

So convinced is Graham of the benefits, that he has encouraged staff to undertake a Business Improvement Techniques NVQ Level 2.

An integral and important element of this programme is Skills for Life training. In addition to building personal skills it also gives the candidates an additional



qualification equivalent to 5 GCSEs.

### Lean benefits

**Graham said: " We have seen major benefits in flow and team leadership from the training undertaken."**



**"Recently, we won a major contract for a multinational FMCG company with very exacting technical specifications, tight delivery dates and penalty clauses."**

**"We managed to meet the targets by putting process flow into place."**

**"Prior to the lean implementation programme, I doubt if we could have undertaken such a project."**

Yorkshire Productivity continues to work closely with CPL to ensure the lean improvements are sustained.

Two years after the buyout, company turnover has doubled.

Business continues to increase at CPL with the operation working around the clock and the drive to work more efficiently more important than ever.

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