PROJECT 7
EVOLVE TO SURVIVE

Quick Change Over on a Flow Wrap Machine

- 75% reduction in change over time
- 35% increase in direct productivity
- 30% increase in efficiency

The background to the campaign

Our client is the UK's leading 'Food to Go' business; based in Southall, London. With an annual turnover of £250m, their unrivalled portfolio includes some of the biggest brands in the UK retail and foodservice industry.

Project7 commenced engagement with the client to design, implement and coach a Standard Operational Procedure that would provide a stable output from production to processes, and maintain sustainable performance levels, positively impacting on productivity, consequently resulting in increased efficiency levels as well as developing employees' capabilities with specialist training; enabling substantial process improvements to the production line and Flow Wrap Machine process.

To achieve Quick Change Over (QCO) on the Flow Wrap Machine on Production Line 5, Project7 incorporated significant changes to operations, engaging the **nightshift operational team** and **machine minders**.

"The changes have been a huge learning curve, but the specialist coaching has had a positive impact on production processes and the way the team works together, helping operations to run much more smoothly and efficiently"

Production Manager

Challenges

Before Project7 began the process of developing a Lean Standard Operational Procedure (SOP), a one week QCO study was conducted to define the current state of the recently installed Flow Wrap Machine, in order to identify the necessary improvements. This study helped to determine the losses that had been responsible for causing a bottleneck in the production flow, consequently impacting on efficiency and productivity levels.

The study revealed the level of losses, timed from changeovers, to running at around 20 minutes. Losses were occurring post-setup of the machine and post-changeover of the products.

Team brainstorming, between nightshift operational leaders and machine minders, established several possible causes for these losses. Two predominant reasons were the low training levels amongst machine minders, who lacked experience in the new Flow Wrap Machine configuration settings and technology. Particularly, the pre-set programme software which was challenging individuals' production knowledge. Secondly, the absence of a formal procedure and process standards was causing confusion for employees and inconsistency within production.

A process confirmation tool was required to improve communication between shift leaders, and remove the significant variation in the process and resulting losses on the production line. With experienced Machine Minders having left the company, current Minders desperately needed process standards for their development and training in the new Flow Wrap machinery.

Solutions

With these key issues considered, Project7 designed and implemented a series of standardised procedures for the Flow Wrap Machine Changeover; detailing the exact steps to be taken during the changeover process, along with operating descriptions to carefully instruct staff, key points and precise timings. This was further accompanied with diagrams and examples to visually demonstrate the step-by-step process to staff.

Coaching and specialist training was also provided for all Machine Minders, Line Leaders and Production Managers in both the newly-devised Standard Operational Procedures and Flow Wrap Machine technology, to bring all employees to the same standards in all aspects of the Flow Wrap process and to coach them on the latest settings and programmes. This also included further in-depth coaching by an Engineer from Fuji.

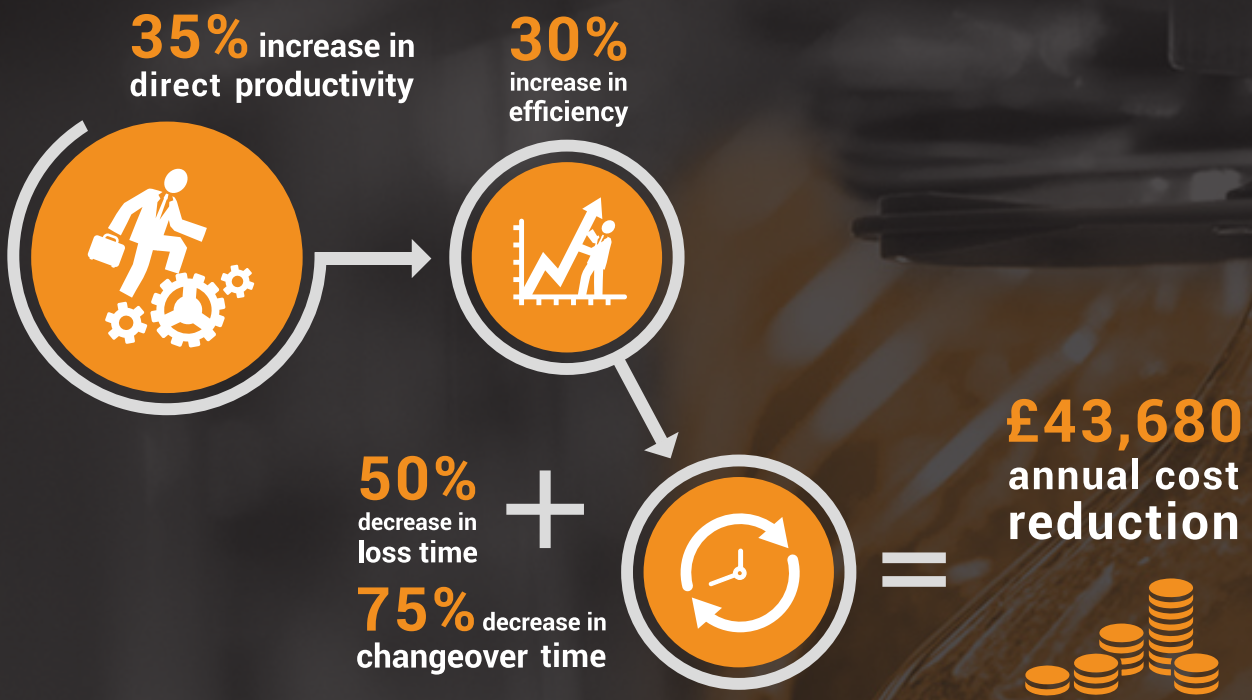
Standard Operational Procedures are now used as a process confirmation tool to help maintain productivity levels. Production Managers, Line Leaders and Manufacturing Managers now contribute their feedback and data to a Process Confirmation Board that captures a live overview of production line data, on a daily basis. This data is then added to an Operations Board, which measures productivity and lost time, and is used as a focal point in Short Interval Control management meetings. This helps to significantly enhance team communication and enables a smoother running-condition. As a result, productivity and efficiency levels have increased dramatically, cutting changeover times and halving losses.

These implementations have not only improved direct productivity and efficiency results; they have enhanced team communication, and ensured that continuous improvement is maintained for the production line.

Increased employee awareness

Greater production control and decision-making

Impact on Performance



Lessons Learnt

- Regular coaching is vital in order to keep all employees up-to-date with new technologies and specialist knowledge.
- **Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs)** are crucial to ensuring everyone is working in the same way, following the same processes; resulting in improved productivity, efficiency and smoother- running condition.
- Identifying the possible causes to challenges and brainstorming as a team is important when focusing on key priorities and improving communication.
- Data capture helps to monitor losses and maintain a continuous improvement process.