

Accelerating Operational Excellence in High-Volume Food Manufacturing

- £2M+ in performance improvement opportunities identified,
- £1.5M capital expenditure avoided,
- £500K in waste reduction through targeted process improvements.
- ROI Greater than 145:1

Background

A leading UK-based food manufacturer with global operations and a strong track record of supplying high-volume retail customers partnered with Project7 to enhance its performance improvement strategy. In 2020, the two organisations launched a tailored Manufacturing Excellence Academy designed to embed Lean thinking and elevate operational leadership capability across the business.

The programme quickly proved its value, with early cohorts generating over **£74,000 in savings per delegate** and delivering a **27:1 return on investment within just 10 weeks**. Encouraged by this success, senior leaders launched a new strategic initiative in 2024 to drive further impact—targeting a high-performing flagship site to accelerate gains and uncover an additional **£2 million+ in operational savings** over the following year.

What our client said

"Thank you — this has been an outstanding piece of work. Not only did it unlock the savings we needed, but it also identified and began delivering significantly more value than we originally set out to achieve."

Managing Director, UK and Ireland

Challenges

While the initial rollout of the Manufacturing Excellence Academy had delivered significant successes through developed internal capability, it also revealed that deeper, systemic opportunities remained untapped. Triggering the initiation of more intrinsic onsite support.

Key challenges hindering the Operating System deployment:

Fragmented deployment of operational excellence

Lean principles and tools were applied inconsistently across departments, resulting in variable maturity and diluted impact.

Limited operational visibility

Critical data gaps and underdeveloped KPIs made it difficult to identify bottlenecks, trends, and true drivers of loss.

Leadership rhythm misalignment

Daily performance management lacked structure and consistency, weakening real-time control and rapid problem-solving.

Reactive asset care practices

Gaps in maintenance planning and ownership led to avoidable downtime and hidden inefficiencies.

Cultural inconsistency

Variability in behaviours, accountability, and problem-solving capability across teams hindered the creation of a continuous improvement mindset.

To address these barriers and realise the £2+ in year savings challenge, a targeted **3P Diagnostic** was commissioned—designed to evaluate current-state maturity, quantify opportunity, and develop a roadmap for sustainable, accelerated performance improvement.





Solutions

To unlock further performance gains, Project7 deployed its **3P Diagnostic Framework (People + Process = Performance)** – a proven approach combining technical analysis, frontline observation, and leadership engagement to build a practical roadmap for improvement.

The diagnostic focused on five core areas across two production units:

MEP Deployment & KPI Cascade Review

Assessed the maturity of the Manufacturing Excellence Programme within the flagship unit. Revealed gaps in daily performance management (DRM) and leadership behaviours. Recommended a redesigned visual management system, clearer metric ownership, and introduction of line-level short interval control to follow-up actions in real-time.

Value Stream & Constraint Analysis

Conducted detailed line analysis, identifying the Mondini tray sealer as the production constraint. Found opportunities to increase planning rates and reduce starvation of key assets. Avoided £1.5M of planned capital expenditure by unlocking capacity through better scheduling, flow control, and batch management.

Asset Care & TPM Assessment

Reviewed TPM maturity across 7 core pillars, highlighting inconsistent operator engagement, lack of visual standards, and missing escalation processes. Developed recommendations for Autonomous Maintenance rollout, visual routines, and one-point lessons. Also proposed a roadmap to improve cross-functional engineering governance and shopfloor feedback loops.

Organisational Infrastructure & Leadership

Identified the need for stronger alignment through Hoshin Kanri and leadership standard work. Advised creation of a **Visual PMO**, improved role clarity, and structured coaching to embed daily problem-solving, consequence management, and performance dialogues at all levels.

Slow Cooked Operations Review

Performed a light-touch diagnostic revealing high levels of rework, WIP congestion, and labour inefficiency. Recommended cooker utilisation optimisation, layout re-design, and better flow via Kanban principles. Labour balancing was forecast to yield £125K–£250K in savings per shift, with a further £500K in material waste reductions identified.

Impact on Performance

The diagnostic rapidly translated into tangible business impact:



£2 million+ in savings opportunity identified, with immediate planning rate increases delivering productivity gains.



£1.5 million capital spend avoided by improving utilisation of existing slicing assets.

Weekly shift pattern changes saved £15,000 per week—equating to **£900,000 per annum**.

Yield improvement of over £1.1 million per annum, enabled through better data use and problem-solving.

In the secondary area:

Material waste reduction estimated at £500,000 per year.

Labour cost reduction of £125,000–£250,000 per shift through balancing and process improvements.



Foundations laid for systemic improvement through visual controls, data visibility, and **cultural change**.