

Case study

David Lisle Furniture

“We had a positive response from our employees – it looks organised, and the employees can now make items more easily as everything is at hand”

David Lisle are a high Value Added kitchen manufacturer, with a historically good profitability, but labour costs had risen as turnover dropped in the downturn. MAS were asked to help David Lisle to improve productivity in the factory and restore profitability levels



“Working with MAS has dramatically improved our space utilisation and efficiency, and also our Company performance.”

David Lisle
Managing Director

Key Achievements

- Strategy developed and deployed
- Employees engaged, culture changed
- Layout improved and workplace organized
- Non Value Added activity reduced
- Agility/Flexibility improved
- Productivity improved by over 20%
- Space utilisation improved by 20%

Description of the Project

David Lisle Furniture is a manufacturer of high quality premium kitchens. It has a turnover of £1.2M and 10 employees. The Company was founded by David Lisle 26 years ago.

During the last two years, like most manufacturing companies the impact of the recession has put pressure on profit margins resulting in the company needing to reduce costs and lift profitability.

MAS activity

Initially MAS consultant Mike Brook visited the company to carry out a business review early in 2010 which highlighted the need to introduce improved working practices to address the cost reduction objectives highlighted by the company.

Action taken

MAS saw a way to help by developing a 5S structure in the Operations, Dave Roberts then worked with 'company team to change the culture.

This has helped the company to improve productivity and business performance.

Manufacturing concern

The review highlighted the need to address workplace organisational improvement.

The Layout of the two factories was a key area for improvement. Flow of material, stock and work in progress issues were leading to inefficiencies and duplication of effort.

The following were set as improvement objectives:-

- To improve plant layout
 - to reduce travel between factories
 - To create improve storage areas for WIP and a finished goods area
- To increase productivity through less time searching for tools, products and equipment.
- To reduce waiting time
- To reduce inventory
- To reduce damage to stored products

It was agreed that MAS practitioner Dave Roberts, would carry out a 5S programme on both workshops and the materials stock areas.

The plan was to review the layout, and look at ways to improve product flow, define improved finished goods areas, reduce the time searching for things

and reduce the potential for quality damage.

The 5S project was in completed in 5 phases (10 days) over a 6 month period

The team were introduced to lean thinking and how to increase added value operations in a manufacturing business.

Seven waste analysis techniques were taught and applied to the participants company as a method of establishing the current condition.

The results

The layout has been changed to put all machining in one area and assembly in the other. This has significantly reduced the time to travel between the areas. There has been a finished goods area created avoiding storage in the main factory, this has eliminated the delays moving goods around, avoiding damage and quality issues.

The improved manufacturing areas have lifted productivity avoiding delays and searching for tools and equipment

The visual appearance of the factory has improved and is a show piece for Customers who regularly visit the factory and showrooms

Inventory has been reduced in the raw materials storage area and is planned in the main stores.