

Case study

Exhausts UK

Based in Sheffield, Exhausts UK used MAS for expert help to introduce a range of improvements to prepare the business for a huge increase in production following a major new contract win.

MAS specialist Brian Houghton visited the company and mapped out a programme of work to implement Lean tools, techniques and measures that would improve business efficiency and educate the workforce into a culture of continuous improvement.



“We were delighted when we won the contract last year to supply our exhausts to a major car dealership but quickly realised that it would mean gearing up for a massive increase in production and turned to MAS for help.

The MAS intervention has undoubtedly given us a vital competitive edge and reduced our production time which means we have been able to rise to the challenges of the Subaru contract and successfully beat off tough foreign competition from countries such as China.”

Rachel Jarvis, Director

Key Achievements

As a result of the manufacturing improvement project, the company has achieved the following:

- > Production capacity has increased by 15%
- > Turnover is on target to increase by £70,000 this year.
- > One extra hour per employee per day has been generated for additional value-adding work.
- > Daily production of the volume manufacture line has increased from 23 to 27 units per day.
- > One new job has been created.
- > One of the directors has completed a high-level learning programme in Leading Organisational Change through the Manufacturing Masters programme.

Provided by

“Following our MAS improvement project, further developments will hopefully include the development of our own retail exhaust range as well as increasing our production capacity to service existing and new contracts.”

Rachel Jarvis, Director

How MAS helped

MAS specialist Brian Houghton carried out a manufacturing review of the business which led to a number of improvement opportunities.

Brian then worked with the team to develop a programme of work to address these opportunities, which began with all staff being given an introduction into Lean principles, tools and techniques through two separate training sessions. An opportunity for staff to contribute improvement ideas was given at the end of each session, which were logged and prioritised for investigation.

It was also identified that splitting volume production from custom work would make it easier to identify and simplify the resource and storage needs of each. A dedicated production line was therefore built for volume manufacture on the second floor of the factory, designed using 5S principles and focused on flow and line-balancing. The three employees who work on volume production designed the line themselves to suit their needs.

The ground floor was rearranged into a 5S system focused on reducing non-value adding movement by employees.

Each employee agreed ownership of a particular area of the workplace in order to sustain and improve the 5S state. Lean Champions were also nominated for both areas, and were given more in-depth training to develop a 5S manual for the business.

Anticipated volumes of raw material were reviewed and a system of more formal stock locations and replenishment levels was implemented.

Standard documentation also was developed for various areas of the business; including the pipe bending operation which had the potential for concern as volumes increased.

Throughout the project, Brian Houghton spent time with the company's directors, ensuring all ideas were thoroughly explored. A 25 point initiative log was then generated to be used to drive future improvements.

Results

As a result of the project, the company's turnover is set to rise by £70,000 in the next 12 months along with a substantial increase in profits. One new job has been created and a 12% improvement in people productivity has been achieved.

Director Rachel Jarvis also recently completed the City & Guilds Licentiate module in Leading Organisational Change through the Manufacturing Masters programme which will assist in maintaining momentum.

The team have now developed a vital edge over competitors and reduced their production time, putting them in a stronger position to cope with increased volumes and win new business in the future.



Exhausts UK

Employees: 11

Location: Sheffield, South Yorkshire

Manufactures: stainless steel exhausts

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