

Pace International, Washington

Enhancing crops and production efficiency

Pace International in Spokane, Washington, produces and markets an extensive line of pre and post-harvest products for maintaining and enhancing the quality of various agricultural crops. The specific products include plant nutrition products, post-harvest cleaners and coatings, and crop protection products that control animal and insect damage. Because of the highly competitive market, it was imperative that production efficiency and product effectiveness were controlled in order to establish a continuous improvement program. Renoir Consulting was called in to re-design the management control system and to establish behaviors that support the system among the management and staff.

ANALYSIS

An assessment revealed that:

- Production capacity was an unknown
- Equipment was fixed on an as-needed basis
- Ineffective quality program
- Silo mentality between functions

PROJECT

The Renoir team agreed to deliver the following:

- An improved management control system
- A weekly management report, which sealed the feedback loop between the production site and the corporate office.
- A system of production and labor hour standards.
- An improved quality control system, linked to the overall management report.
- Installation of a preventative maintenance system and schedule.
- Improved communication by e-enabling key performance indicators.
- Behavioral shaping which gained “buy-in” from the local management team and solidified continuous improvement.

The bottom-line benefit was a more “self-aware” organization through an improved control system, which could help to identify problems, determine positive solutions, and implement those solutions through positive attitudes.

Because of the nature of the project and the relatively small staff at Pace, the project was carried out without a task force but with greater involvement amongst all employees. The results included the re-design of a management control system, which gave management more control over their decisions and ensured performance accountability. In addition, management and staff were given a new sense of value, because good performance was also being recognized and illustrated

Key Results

More effective management control system

A system for measuring standards

Preventative maintenance system

Staff acceptance of responsibilities

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through the weekly management reporting. A cultural change was established and sustained results were achieved.

To establish shop-floor controls, machine and labor hours per 1000 pounds of product produced were measured. The production supervisors were given training workshops in efficiency measurement and in monitoring machine and labor hours. They learned to understand their work constraints and to improve daily and weekly planning. Downtime was logged formally for the first time, leading to a better understanding of its impact on production numbers.

Preventive maintenance schedules were developed and installed, which ensured the consistent monitoring of equipment and gave feedback to management to better assess Capex requirements. A weekly management report was developed and installed which electronically captured KPI figures from the daily reports and reported a weekly variance result.

THE RENOIR GROUP

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