

manufacturing advisory service CASE STUDY

south east
mas
the dti manufacturing advisory service



Number of employees 54, Turnover £5m

Empowering the future



Rod Houghton, Managing Director, White Horse Plastics

"Our aim was to move away from a traditional management style focused on 'leading the workforce' to a more empowered workforce who would mould together as one to implement and sustain improvements. In addition, we wanted to build on our previous success in implementing cellular manufacturing by extending the concept throughout the manufacturing facility."

White Horse Plastics, based in Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire, manufactures and assembles plastic injection moulded components for 2nd tier supply, predominantly in the automotive sector (such as gear shift and head lamping washing components). Over the years, the company has diversified into a variety of sectors and achieved rapid growth. The company is heavily customer focused, often collaborating on design and technical specification.

The company contacted the MAS with a view to effecting a cultural change that would empower the workforce and encourage team working to implement and sustain improvements.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- People productivity improvements of 18%
- Improved equipment productivity of 28%
- Reduction in space utilised of 10%
- Reduced travel distance through the manufacturing process of 425m
- Improved morale and team working

**5 DAY
PROGRAMME**

THE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Senior management were concerned that attitudes within the organisation might be a barrier to change. The engagement with the MAS was the first genuine opportunity for active involvement in an improvement programme for this unit.

An initial Manufacturing Advice Process (MAP) was completed to identify the primary business issues that White Horse Plastics wanted to improve and to explain how the MAS could assist.

The company committed to a rapid improvement workshop, focused on key objectives linked to improving materials to machine delivery, on-machine operation and finishing, on-machine final inspection, improving tool change and consistency and implementing a sustainable 5S initiative.

Two planning meetings set the agenda for the programme, looking at the improvement process, business issues, objectives, performance measures, budgets and HR issues. Training followed in a number of areas,

including Identification of Value and Non Value Adding Activities, 5S Workplace Organisation, Process Mapping (including activity charts and string diagrams), SMED (set-up reduction) and OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness).

SMED on machine set-up led to a process and layout redesign, which was carried out on Day Three. Day Four was given over to implementing layout and process changes and to carrying out 5S in the tool setters area. In addition a number of follow-on activities were agreed covering skills development and utilisation, standardising the filing system, tool numbering and many other aspects of day to day activity at the company.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

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What People said at White Horse Plastics

"I feel that the four days bought everybody together as a team, and a lot of good ideas were initiated during the week. A vast improvement"
Stuart Donnan

"An interesting and informative four days which I enjoyed immensely"
Clive Cook

"All objectives have been reviewed, challenged, and successfully completed"
Colin Voller

"The most significant aspect for me was to see the change in the people's self belief that they could make a difference themselves"
Paul Bobby

"A refreshing eye opener and a very worthwhile exercise. Lets' try to keep it moving in the right direction"
Nathan Andrews

ABOUT THE MAS

The MAS is a national DTI initiative, delivered in the South East by a team of Manufacturing Specialists working for EEF South, the regional centre of manufacturing excellence. It is delivered in association with the Business Link network.



The MAS Project Team for White Horse Plastics were Principal Manufacturing Specialist Annie Pearson and Manufacturing Specialists Stewart Barrass and David Crowfoot.

Stewart Barrass

"The challenge for White Horse Plastics is to drive the business forward by using the combined talents of the workforce. Empowering people by giving them the skills they need to contribute enables a business to turn talk about 'step change' into reality."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you feel your business could benefit from the MAS Step Change Programme or for any of the MAS services please complete the fax back form below and fax to **01256 741011**

You can also contact: helpline@mas-se.org.uk or visit the website: www.mas-se.org.uk or call the Helpline on 0845 609 2121

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Organisation	
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Address	
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Tel Number	Email
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Type/Nature of Business	
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Number of Employees	
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I would like the MAS to contact me to discuss:	
• Hands on business improvement	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• Training opportunities and materials	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• Lean Manufacturing	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• 5S/Visual Management	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• Kanban	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• Process Analysis	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• Continuous Improvement	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>
• I would like to join the Manufacturing Network and receive a free monthly email about funding opportunities and events	Tick box <input type="checkbox"/>