

# Case Study – Lean Improvement Project



“The programme provided the training and facilitation to develop a junior group of people whom as the figures show provided the company with excellent benefits “

## Project Objectives

To identify opportunities to improve the efficiency of the upholstery hides finishing process.

## Background

Bridge of Weir is a major supplier of finished upholstery leather to the automotive, aviation, marine and contract design industries and had previously identified the area above as being in need of increase efficiency in order to meet continued and growing demand. The programme was part funded by Scottish Enterprise as part of the “Lean Management Thinking Programme”. The company made a capital outlay of £10,000 mainly on the purchase of trip switches and barrels after productivity and energy savings had been identified.

## Assistance Provided

A team was selected to participate on the lean management programme, basic training in measurement and analysis techniques was delivered to the team. The team established a project and defined the parameters for the project. The team attended a series of 4 modules which enabled them to learn the tools and techniques required to undertake the project.

## Findings

- Lack of equipment to move/store materials resulting in reduced manufacturing capacity
- Excessive energy and utility consumption
- Excessive change over times resulting in inefficiency of machinery
- The team worked on two main areas of the project relating to productivity and environmental improvements:
- Introducing new barrels increased capacity by 10% with a value to the business of £300,000pa
- Improving OEE and reducing set up time gave an additional saving of £2,250pa
- Pneumatic process improvements (introduction of trip switches and visualising the process)
- Compressed air usage reduced by 50% saving £15,000pa
- Process cleaning (recycling of cleaning rags) saving £4,680pa
- Chiller process - energy reduction saving £7,500pa
- Reduction in water usage saving £7,750pa

## Outcomes

- Productivity improvements £302,250pa
- Energy savings of £22,500pa
- Water savings of £7,750pa
- Materials savings of £4,860pa
- Total productivity improvements and savings of £33,7360pa

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