



R&R Newsletter

Reducing Risk/Removing Waste

ISO Support Group

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LEAN JOURNEY...

Strategy 1:

- Isolate the Value Stream

Strategy 2:

- Specifying Value

Strategy 3:

- Mapping the Value Stream

Strategy 4:

- Making the Stream Flow

Strategy 5:

- Letting Customers Pull Value

Strategy 6:

- Seeking Perfection

CAN LEAN HELP?

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Removing Waste:

In this Issue under the heading *Removing Waste* I'll be covering the topic of **Lean Operations – Example: Tufco Technologies Inc.**

The following is a brief overview of a Lean implementation story:

Tufco Technologies Inc., Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin... Over the past two years, Tufco Technologies significantly expanded and upgraded its operations while recording more than 2 million hours without a lost-time injury.

Lou LeCalsey, Tufco President and CEO, said sales have doubled to more than \$110 million annually, and the number of employees has doubled as well. Eighty percent of production is non-woven wet wipes produced under contract for other companies. "It's growth that's solid," he said. Tufco's earnings have been slower to follow — it reported a 1 cent per share profit for the second quarter — but LeCalsey expects the company's focus on productivity to make its mark.

The company has adopted Six Sigma and Lean approaches and more than doubled its annual capacity in four months, LeCalsey said. He said Tufco has five times less waste than before implementing Lean. "We went through a period here that was pure hell, last May, June and July. We had 150 temps and volumes way larger than we were told," he said. "We are running out of room fast," and would have done so already if not for the Lean implementation, LeCalsey said. Tufco achieved its gains — and safety record — with a work force that is about 45 percent Hispanic and Hmong workers, many of them with only a basic understanding of English. "It's really worked out," LeCalsey said. "It's fun to work with them all. They bring a different perspective, and they are great workers."

Safety is first among Tufco's operating principles, LeCalsey said. "The belief is, if you are doing the right thing safety-wise, you are doing the right thing in production and quality," he said. Throughout the plant, workers with red T-shirts or coats stand by to train, guide or assist co-workers with safety issues. They are volunteers, called line safety leaders, who hold regular jobs. They are the first line of defense against behavior and actions that lead to accidents. Because Tufco's growth has been so fast, the company has had to rely on a lot of temporary help. In a plant full of moving equipment, they are the most vulnerable to accidents.

The safety leaders receive nine hours of formalized safety training. "We drilled them pretty hard, pretty good," said Dawn Guetschow-Bitter, environmental health and safety manager. "Their job includes helping train employees on safety issues, tornado safety, evacuation plans and confidentiality." Safety at Tufco isn't just a job for the red shirts, said Guetschow-Bitter. She said line employees are not afraid to tell anyone — LeCalsey included — about safety lapses.

To view more information on this example (and others)... you can visit our Newsletter page at our website to view the complete article: www.isosupport.com/newsletters/newsletters.htm

PS: Don't forget to look at the Q&A section of this Newsletter for some final thoughts on this Lean implementation example.

PUBLICATIONS

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the manuals & books that we've recently published:

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"The 3 Biggest Mistakes People Make with ISO 9001"; ISO

9001:2000 Tips, Tools and Techniques

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If you enjoyed reading our previous ISO Newsletters you'll find that this book contains many of the practical approaches and advice that I've discussed in these Newsletters over the past 5 years.

Q: What are the "lessons learned" from this example?

A: Here they are...

- In addition to having no lost-work injuries in more than 2 million hours, Tufco has less than one-third the industry average of OSHA-reportable injuries.
- The biggest struggle Tufco has is with people working directly on conveyor belts. It looks innocent, but it's their biggest source of injuries.
- Safety Leaders learn to read whether a trainee is understanding the message. When someone who doesn't speak English well responds with a series of "OK, OK," they know to try a different approach.
- "It can be hard," said Dulce Gutierrez, a quality technician and line safety leader. "We just don't give up on safety. We physically show them and then keep going and going."

Until next time...

Tim Renaud

Helping Business Professionals Reduce Risk and Remove Waste!

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Tim Renaud, P.Eng., B.A.Sc., is a senior trainer and consultant with the ISO Support Group. His business experience covers over twenty-two years with both small and large organizations within various industries. He began consulting in 1992 and achieved ISO 9001 Registration for ISO Support Group in Oct/1998. Specific areas of expertise include training and consulting on installing ISO Management Systems, as well as implementing Process Improvement Strategies, always with a focus on reducing risk and removing waste (becoming Lean). Association memberships include the American Society for Quality (ASQ) and the Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO).