

LEAN KAIZEN News

Together we lean smarter

**15 Years
Problems
Solved in
5 days**



Focus Kaizen Kicks Off Lean Journey

"Before, we always have WIP piled up here and there. Now we can see that there is no need to keep WIP!", the Lean Coordinator of a renown apparel manufacturer in Malaysia cannot hide her excitement.

"I can see that the production team really work as a group. Before, everyone just focus on their own work and do not really worry about the quality. Now each of them look at quality as no one wants to pass a defective work down!" Equally enthusiastic is the quality manager.

Like many contract garment manufacturers, this public listed company is facing tremendous pressures: margin erosion, stringent quality demand and shorter order lead time. Gone were the large orders, replacing with small order with ever increasing styles.

"In order to live up to our slogan - The Supplier of Choice - we must try something new." That was the mindset of the Assistant General Manager, at the time he decided to try LEAN to look for solution.

After organizing two batches of in-housing on Lean Manufacturing, a 5 days Kaizen workshop was organized to launch the first major implementation effort. Both training and Kaizen were led by Pamalex Consulting, a leading Lean Six Sigma consulting firm in Asia Pacific. Three senior consultants were deployed with the mission to shorten manufacturing lead time which was almost remained the same for the past 15 years.

Client success story



The first day was spent mapping the current value stream. Three Kaizen teams were formed with intensive implementation of various lean techniques concurrently, among them were VSM, Standard Work, U-Cell system, Kanban and 3P.

The major breakthrough came from the implementation of U shape, single piece production system. This is further supported by Kanban system linking the upstream cutting department with the downstream sewing section.

Team spirit was the key success factor. The dedication shown by the Kaizen teams motivate other departments and shop floor operators to render support. The technical team scarify family time by staying up till 4am to ensure all machines modifications were made on time.

Management showed their commitment by making swift decisions. Their effort was paid off with outstanding results.



"With this new system, we immediate can see that it is less crowded, movement is easy and less space is required. Unlike before, where workers have limited space to work, always have to stop work to get things required." said, the production supervisor.

She continued to add, "Furthermore, each operators know who are their customers and they would try their best to meet the customers demand."

"We solved the 15 years old problem in 5 days ! We will never look back! "

The remark made by the Assistant General Manager, best sum up the emotion and impact of this pilot project.

This event marked the company's early breakthrough in their lean journey.

- ❖ Process Cycle Efficiency up from 0.21 to 0.36. Improved 85%.
- ❖ Manufacturing Lead Time drops 29 days to 16 days. Improved 45%.
- ❖ Labor Efficiency up from 2.77 to 3.31. Improved 19%.
- ❖ In-line WIP dropped 80%
- ❖ Space saving 50%
- ❖ 5S improved