

## 7 wastes removal

### Increased Productivity & Quality Levels by removing 7 Wastes

One of Aster's principals was employed by a global consumer electronics manufacturing company to increase productivity and improve quality levels.

The factory, based in the north east of England, had been established for a number of years manufacturing colour television sets (CTVs) for the UK market. It had however grown so quickly that the workforce of over 200 staff lacked unity and leadership.

Our principal was employed with a view to achieving the following objectives: -

- Increase Productivity by up to 20%.
- Increase first time yield at both test and final inspection by 10%.
- Create an environment of teamwork across functional departments
- Improve factory communication processes

At the start of the project the factory output of CTVs was approx. 12,000 sets per week made up of 14" portables through to 24" Fast Text models. The most 'accepted' CTVs produced by any one line in any day was approximately 700 sets.

A programme was quickly implemented to highlight all the 'waste' in the processes and improvement activities were initiated to tackle the productivity issue. New performance indicators were introduced in conjunction with production management team.

It quickly became clear that the productivity of the factory was being significantly affected by the cumulative affect of poor first time yields throughout the factory's many processes. By tackling the yield issue first, it would theoretically be possible to improve the productivity by the elimination or reduction of rework, double handling and other non-value added activities.

Improvement teams were set up across departments to look at particular problems that affected the quality of the product and hence the output of the facility.

Pareto and Tally charts were used to monitor quality levels from the various processes and the bottlenecks in the process were tackled to increase the overall output of each of the 4 main production lines. Successive checking was successfully introduced to each of the assembly stages. So successful was this initiative that the line technicians who had previously struggled to cope with line defects were now able to be transferred to other value adding activities.

At the end of an 11-month period, the factory productivity had increased by 40% to 20,000 sets per week with the model range being increased by the addition of bigger wide screen sets in the UK factory. Two of the four lines had consistently achieved daily output figures in excess of 1100 'accepted' sets per day.

Quality defects had fallen by an average of 27% and the workforce had been organised and structured into self-managing teams across functional divides.