

Aberdeen Foyer is a successful local charitable organisation working to prevent and alleviate youth homelessness and unemployment. They provide supported accommodation, access to a range of education, training, employment opportunities and community health services for young people and their community.



### Lean Team

**Caroline Swales** –  
Head of Finance

**Kathleen Singer**  
Early Intervention Senior Development Manager

**Dora Coull**  
Office Manager

**Lisa Duthie**  
Foyer Health Team Manager

**Diane Gill**  
HR Manager

**Mary Annal**  
Executive Director

**Leona McDermid**  
Commercial Director

**LeeAnne Hepburn**  
Foyer Learning Support Worker

### Overall Lean project objective

The overall objective was to examine the recruitment process and to recommend and implement improvements.

### Project initiation

The team quickly came to the conclusion that each area of the Foyer was operating their recruitment process slightly differently. They therefore decided to produce a value stream map to cover the complete recruitment process for each strand of the business. Commencing with Foyer Health, the team worked across the business through interactive road shows to document systems whilst creating a feedback loop. The road shows provided invaluable information and allowed all employees to make suggestions for improvements. Examples of key areas of concern are as follows:

- Constant disjointed activity
- Lack of clarity of responsibilities at key stages
- Limited use of IT to streamline processes
- Review of disclosure process required
- Many opportunities for better resource utilisation

### Lean tools utilised

- Value analysis
- Cause and effect / Ishikawa diagrams
- Impact Effort Analysis
- Poka Yoke
- Team brainstorming
- Company-wide group consultation

### Working through the analysis

Following the initial high level process map a series of detailed process maps and flow-charts were created. This enabled the team to start putting structure to the enormous amount of information that was being collated. Costings, lead times and the impact of non-value added were included.

Detailed Ishikawa diagrams were prepared by the team to communicate across the organisation and to plan actions for improvements. They began to make decisions on high impact and low impact activities depending on the lead times, costs and amount of inefficiency.

As the impact of inefficiency was now being made visible to all, the team were able to start planning for the future. This led to new flow charts being created which highlighted what could be achieved through better resource utilisation. The team put a lot of time and effort into creating these charts.

### Financial impact of improvements

Having produced improved methodologies for the future, the team demonstrated that the cost of recruitment over the past 12 months was £228,325 equating to 7,105 hours of staff time. With the improved process, recruitment of the same number of staff could be achieved at a cost of £184,495 thus generating a saving of £43,830 per annum. This further equated to an increased staff capacity of 1,234 hours.

### Immediate next steps

- Create electronic intelligent forms and an on-line application process
- Implement a new series of templates to reduce administration time
- Communicate flow charts for the full recruitment process with checklists and timings

- Update job description templates
- Communicate good practice from the Lean programme throughout the whole organisation

### Future improvements

- Develop and implement a training programme for the HR database
- Develop and implement an evaluation and monitoring procedure
- Develop new guidelines for all managers within the recruitment process
- Post specific information within the virtual recruitment desk
- Create a tool box of recruitment selection options and relevant training programmes
- Streamline the fund raising process

### Key Learning Points from the Aberdeen Foyer team

- Learn to always ask 'Why?'
- Don't jump to conclusions – Lean analysis tools will create a more effective solution
- As a team, things can be changed and you need to consult, discuss and listen
- The diversity of Foyer demands has highlighted that one size does not fit all. Lean Thinking opened our eyes to different ways of tackling issues.
- Practice Lean Thinking everyday

### Environmental impact

Improved administration on the recruitment process alone will result in a reduction of 12,215 sheets of paper and 665 envelopes. This equates to 0.061 tonnes of Co2 for paper and 0.0067 tonnes of Co2 for envelopes.

"It has changed the way I work making me stop and question 'Is this the best way of doing things'"

"Why why why... simple and effective"

"This has made me realise that the smallest of changes can make the greatest impact"