

Established in 1990, Growforth is an award winning wholesale nursery providing unparalleled service to garden centres and landscape customers throughout the UK.

As a growing business the company has the resources and capabilities to efficiently deal with both the predictable and the unpredictable challenges of this very competitive and dynamic market place.



Lean Team

Stan Green
Managing Director

Maria Forrest
Administration

Jim Russell
Transport

Fiona Ross
Nursery

Why Lean Management?

Stan Green (MD) is a keen advocate of efficient working and he has run the Growforth business for 20 years bringing new innovations to ensure that the business thrives and grows in this very competitive market place. The Scottish Enterprise Lean programme appealed to Stan as it allowed the flexibility of running modules both on-site and off-site enabling all key staff to be part of the Lean development.

The Lean Project Overall Objective

The initial aim was to increase efficiencies of plant and people by 25% and as a consequence increase turnover by 25% on existing staff levels. This was to be achieved by working smarter, not harder, and increasing the skill levels and job satisfaction of staff

The Lean Project Sub Objectives

1. Identify two processes to yield quick wins by collectively examining the overall process through Value Stream Mapping

2. Create a process for sustainable data gathering and monitoring for continuous improvement

3. Plan on-going lean thinking into the Growforth business culture

Defining Processes

The team spent many hours creating a high level Value Stream map and this highlighted many opportunities. By visually displaying the map everybody became involved in documenting statistics to measure key areas of focus.

Sub objective 1 focused on the Goods In and Order Lifting processes

"Goods In" Process

Using SMART and PDCA the team gathered more data and began to change the process. Stock management and workplace organization (5S) were used to improve and activity charts were used to measure and maintain improvements. "Before & After" pictures were taken clearly demonstrating how a focused approach can create a more efficient workplace.

"Order Lifting" Process

Reorganising and measuring activity in Goods In resulted in improvements in

- Supplier notification
- Signage
- Staffing Goods In
- Segmentation of Suppliers

These two areas of focus have led to the development of achieving sub objectives 2&3

Measuring Improvement

This is a seasonal business so the measurement of productivity will carry on throughout 2010. However the visual workplace organization as a result of the project is exceptional. The team has created their own 5S Audit process and this measures the benefits whilst identifying on-going areas for continuous improvement

SIPOC & Waste

The team has introduced SIPOC charts to work lean thinking into all their supplier/ customer relationships. This is focusing the company on the concept of the "7" wastes in a real and meaningful way.

Bottom Line Improvement

The company expects to yield a £10,000 cost reduction during 2010 as a result of the project (1% of turnover) and will continue to improve under its new "Lean & Green" initiative.

"Even in a small business like ours "Lean Thinking" can have an enormous effect on our ability to remain competitive. The Scottish Enterprise Lean programme has the flexibility to help small businesses and this is essential to engage with SME's"

Stan Green, Managing Director