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Lean Team

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Lean Implementation Project

A cross functional group was assembled from all four university campuses. They aimed to develop an understanding of "Lean" principles for wider dissemination throughout the University whilst concentrating on the internal mailing process on the Paisley Campus as the main project. The evolving mail process had created a service that was over engineered demonstrating how costs can soon grow disproportionate to the benefits delivered. The internal mail project was seen as an area that could generate tangible results whilst improving communications.

Lean tools utilised:

The team mapped out the mail process to and from the Paisley Campus and created an extensive "Brown Paper" map. An activity analysis on the internal and external mail processes was created. Interviews were carried out with staff involved at different stages. Information was collated via staff surveys using the intranet service and it became apparent that people had very different views and expectations. The team carried out Gemba walks, created Ishikawa diagrams and Pareto charts, and analysed the service using QCD.

Problem & Objective Statement

Problem statements were created resulting in 4 objective statements.

Objective statement 1

Reduce the time/resource by 25% whilst minimizing the impact on the mail service.

Objective statement 2

To improve communications and create a process to eliminate incorrect addressing to less than 10% of mail.

Objective statement 3

Follow up projects examining the scope and targets for reducing mail output, and alternative methods of achieving goals.

Objective statement 4

Initial reduction of 10% would provide a saving of £17,500, 135,000 sheets of paper and 45,000 envelopes. This would reduce Co2 and save 2,700 kwh of energy.

Project Outcome

The following recommendations were presented to Senior Management:

- Rationalise the mail collection & delivery to 1 per day
- Reduce the janitorial time spent on the mail service by 25%
- Provide information on the workings of the mail system with metrics and costs
- Update staff directories to reduce the mislabeling of internal mail
- Trial changes from March 2010
- Review the new process in Sept 2010
- Reduce external mail by 10%
- Carry out an internal audit of the principal generators of internal and external mail
- A long term objective to move to a paperless organisation

Business Benefits

- £17,500 reduction in stationary costs
- 1,550 Janitorial hours saved
- 75% reduction in mail errors
- 2,700kwh reduction in energy
- 1160kg CO2 reduction
- 5 tonnes of material removed from landfill

"Our involvement in the program allowed us to take time to understand a key operational process, identify areas of inefficiency using various Lean Management techniques and then introduce changes to make it more effective"

David J Campbell, Business Analyst