

Assessment Case Study

Major Gardening Products Manufacturer

RECOMMENDATIONS	BENEFITS
Improving Pick Performance	Performance improvement of 25% Reduction in overtime by 45%
Improved storage layout	14% increase in floor space utilisation Closure of external storage facility saving £73k pa
Transfer to new facilities	Action plan for the relocation of the business

The scenario

Following continual high growth over the last few years the client required a review of operations to assess the suitability of current working practices and facilities.

As the new manufacturing facility was smaller, it was required to introduce appropriate Lean Manufacturing principles allowing the factory space to be utilised in a more efficient manner.

The review

A WBS Company Assessment is a comprehensive study of a client's operation. Tailored to suit the needs of the client, it can either focus on particular problematic areas of a client's business, or provide a wider overview of the business.

WBS initially performed a Company Assessment which analysed the methods the client employed to fulfil market demand and the suitability of existing facilities to meet future business demands.

The findings

The analysis performed by WBS highlighted the following:

- Pick face layout not fully supportive of picking activities
- Vital product information not included on the pick list
- Distance travelled to pick products affecting picking efficiencies
- High dependency on pickers remembering key product information
- Physical limitations of despatch area becomes severe bottleneck at peak times
- Despatch bottleneck would severely impact ability to support business within 24 months
- The need to move to new premises within 3 years



The recommendations

WBS recommended several initiatives to be adopted by the client, which included:

Future state vision for the client including :

- New storage and pick face layouts, incorporating Lean flow principles
- Planning storage locations of items according to demand profiles
- Improved information on pick lists
- Performance improvements of picking activities

The method

Recognising the need to change and the identification of improvements to a business are comparatively easy when compared with the complexity of implementation. Changes which result in sustaining targeted improvements to the business require a consultative approach with the people involved and affected. In consultation with key business representatives, the main areas of concentration were:

- Layout Design – Designing the existing facility to provide greater flexibility and adoption of Lean material flow principles.
- Support of Pick activities – Categorisation of items stored, categorisation of equipment used for packing & transportation, designing a new set of information to be provided on pick lists

