



SMART Advice

td@SmartAdviceConsulting.com
mob: 0794 002 6762



SITUATION

- ✓ Subsidiary business owned by one of the top-4 supermarkets in the UK
- ✓ A busy packhouse with 15 production lines
- ✓ Poor line speed & set-up standardisation

REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Quickly make speed improvements to be sustained throughout the busy period
- ✓ Deliver the changes through managers and team members
- ✓ Put controls in place to ensure the changes are sustained

KEY SKILLS

- ✓ Machine standard settings
- ✓ Machine cycle time monitoring
- ✓ Process mapping
- ✓ Training processes
- ✓ Employee engagement
- ✓ Manager development

CASE STUDY

MAXIMISING LINE OUTPUT

The packhouse contained six lines which packed the same product types on the same equipment. Previously, all the lines had been set up to run at different speeds, with the fastest being almost double of the slowest. When asked why, the operatives and managers would simply say “It has always been like that”.

To ensure the packhouse could ramp up to meet future demands, a project was allocated to a team manager, and a key operative was identified to work on the project. A project plan was then created.

The team followed a simple plan based on Six Sigma: Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve & Control, which led to the key learnings that the machines could all cycle at an increased speed and run consistently. Having adjusted the machines to get them running optimally, the team measured the machine cycle time and uptime across all 6 lines with the new settings and, over the 3-month period, efficiency gains were around 8%, saving £150k in direct labour costs (see graph below).

To ensure the changes were sustainable, other machine operatives were trained in setting up the machines correctly with standard settings and training documentation was created. The KPIs measurement tool was also reset to bring the expected line speed up to the new target rate.

