



Case Study: Interim

The challenge

Lyons Seafoods, based in Warminster, is part of the Alfesca Group. Alfesca is a leading European producer of premium festive and convenience foods and has 3,400 employees operating across five production sites in five countries.

Lyons Seafoods business is processing, sourcing and sales of prawns and other speciality seafood to retail, foodservice and manufacturers in the UK and Europe.

Over the last five years, there was a £5m investment in automation and capacity expansion. The £4.5m factory development, completed in 2006, is a state of the art manufacturing facility, with a large chillstore and modern office accommodation.

The interim role was to begin 12 months prior to the new facilities being completed. The initial brief was to address some of the ongoing warehouse/stores issues, namely to:

- eliminate stock collation, errors & discrepancies, and poor pick rotation
- minimise stock write on and write off
- organise and restructure where necessary

Initial investigations revealed there were reasonable systems in place and minor improvements were required to achieve long-term benefits.

The solution

Interim Manager, Stewart Hollis, was brought in to focus on organisation, structure and supervision and to put systems in place that would bring long term benefits.

The first stage was to re-focus the supervisory team into a more facilitative mode of operation and set up a self-managed collation team. A new, on site role of Senior Operator was created to facilitate the process.

All members of the team were involved and regularly updated as to the progress, and standards started to improve.

The feedback

The CEO soon recognised that by getting people involved in the business, improvements will follow.

Stewart eliminated collation errors, stock rotation and discrepancies became a thing of the past. One measure of the success was that Lyons was put on the Sainsbury's Heroes board on a number of occasions - testament to the hard work of the Lyons team.

Paperwork errors hit an all time low at 99% accuracy, the cost per pallet reduced due to the team ethics improving morale and generating performance improvements, and depot claims were reduced by 50%.

Stewart said: "This was just part of the work carried out at Lyons, it for me was an extremely exciting and rewarding time, seeing the efforts of the stores team develop into tangible improvements was very satisfying.

"I will not forget the people at Lyons who proved once more that a business's strength is within its people."

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