

Production Improvement | OCT 2018 - JUN 2019

Company Profile:

Latimer Associates, Inc, a 35-year custom sign manufacturer serving, healthcare, education, corporate, and hospitality markets. Leadership team includes 6 stakeholders (1 President/CEO and 5 Sr Managers) operating 5 sales offices, 2 plants in the US Midwestern territory. Firm employs 100 employees and generates \$18.5 MM in sales annually.

Initial client Interview - Step 1

Existing Conditions

- *Difficulty in breaking down old silos and broken processes*
- *Poor cross-department communication*
- *Challenged to stay operationally disciplined*

Desired changes

- *Develop next generation of “meaningful” leaders*
- *Increase inventory turnover & throughput and decrease lead times*
- *Significantly reduce re-work*
- *Establish customer-centric production order fulfillment and scheduling system*
- *Improve reliability & accountability of production division*
- *Gain peace of mind that business systems and procedures are genuinely customer-centric without constant oversight from ownership.*

Virtual Site Assessment - Step 2

Performed interviews with select management and line level stakeholders, observed general plant operations, and reviewed key systems and reporting processes.

Proposed solution - Step 3

- *Revamp Production Management System, Job scheduling, reporting and quality control*
- *Revise Supply chain system*
- *Clean and organize shop, reconfigure for better flow and efficient WIP staging*
- *Implement Production Management team training*
- *Detail out job descriptions in Production Management*

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Solution Implementation - Step 4

What we accomplished:

- Refreshed organizational structure
- Established relevant KPI metrics for each major department to help manage operations better
- Relocated production management personnel to centralized office location
- Established production management team
- Instituted better communication and real-time schedule reporting processes (tools)
- Trained personnel in time management and more efficient work routines (TOC general framework)
- Trained managers in the importance of:
proper project planning, prioritization, batch release, scheduling, and job costing
- Regained confidence & trust internally with customer-facing positions & roles

What was the resulting benefit?

- Supported a “culture shift” towards “helping people, help themselves”
- Improved accuracy and reliability in reporting
- Significantly enhanced information flow between departments (from sales to installation)
- Inventory turnover in one year has increased approximately 35% which translates to quicker cash collections
- Firmly establish mind set that change will & can happen in a positive manner
- Elevated accountability and responsibility of production personnel
- Taught managers how to become better managers
- Deeper focus and traction on preparation, planning, & performance throughout the organization
- Improve timeliness & effectiveness of communications to customers

Team testimonials:

“We have seen inventory turns increase in less than 12 months which contributes significantly to the cash collection process & bottom line. Another critical outcome is the enhanced connectivity across departments which has regained internal trust & reliability which makes everyone more effective. Culture is now more open to collaborate, challenge & change for the greater good of customers & the enterprise.” President - Mike M.

“John's method of having our team take a long look in the mirror and take a deep dive into the many processes, work flows, and individual roles within our company has resulted in a culture shift that has allowed us to produce great results.” V.P. Business Development – Todd C.

“For a 35-year old company that has, the phrase “we've always done it that way” was no longer viable. An outside set of eyes and processes as well as a re-evaluation of how we do things put us on the right track for the future.” V.P. Information Technology - Ben L.