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Best Practice Case Studies FOOD & DRINK



Industry Trends



Phil Spooner

Head of Food & Drink Sector

Phil.Spooner@sapartners.com

We are seeing a return to optimism within the sector; with renewed investment in both people and assets. Increasing consumer demands for new and alternative products has moved R&D and NPI to the top of the agenda. Whilst diversification is critical, some organizations are succeeding through a simplification approach allowing them to reduce waste & cost within processes and meet the increasing cost of living crisis demands for lower prices. Economic pressures and supply chain challenges are likely to continue with the ongoing war in Ukraine and disruption in other key markets. Global warming has also affected crops for many industries and this will continue. The key will be to build both reliability & flexibility and maintain investment in capability ensuring your teams can rapidly respond to changing market demands.

Market Conditions

- Rising awareness of 'Clean Label' products
- Increasing intake of plant-based food
- Growing demand for regional 'local' food
- Reducing waste in both production and consumption

Challenges

- Embracing Digital Transformation
- Building capability
- Sustainability/Packaging
- Logistics & Distribution Restrictions

Opportunities

- Unlocking people's potential
- Effective and efficient processes
- Minimizing resources utilized
- Working within the communities we operate
- Enhancing customer experience
- Digital and AI

Threats

- Climate Change & Sustainability
- Energy costs & Supply Chain Issues
- Labor Shortages & Workforce Challenges
- Technology Transformation
- Changing Consumer Tastes & Trends
- Food Safety & Security

Case Study

Building a Sustainable Supply Chain at M&S

M&S

M&S has been working proactively with suppliers on issues of ethical trade, environmental sustainability and lean manufacturing since the launch of Plan A in 2007. Over the years, through their Supplier Exchange program, they have captured best practice which has enabled food suppliers to drive forward positive change within their businesses.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the M&S Sustainability program was to provide suppliers with the tools and techniques that they could use to support them:

- Improve flow & flexibility
- Improve quality & productivity
- Reduce waste
- Reduce environmental impact; and
- Improve employee engagement

SOLUTIONS

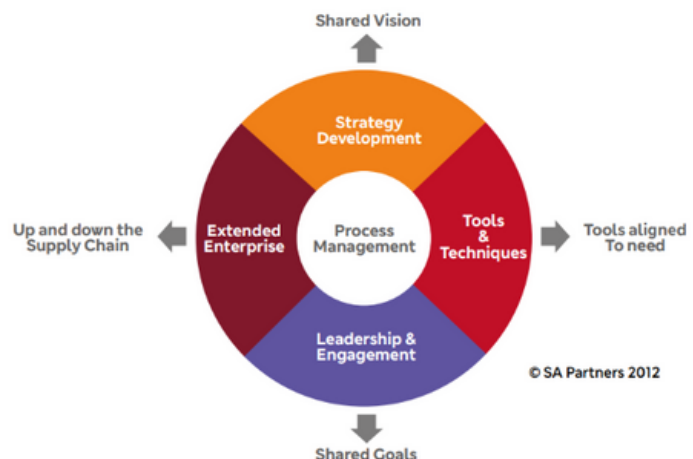
To support its suppliers M&S adopted the Lean Business Model developed by S A Partners. The model which includes five elements which work as an integrated system to deliver sustainable, profitable improvement. Many sites have used this framework to guide them in creating strategies that transform their operational and business performance.

FURTHER INFORMATION

To view the M&S Systems for Success Lean Toolkit follow the QR code below:



THE LEAN BUSINESS MODEL®



Case Study

15 Years of Excellence at Tirlán



Tirlán, formerly known as Glanbia Ireland, is a prominent agribusiness and food company headquartered in Ireland. With a network of over 5,000 farmer suppliers, Tirlán specializes in dairy and grain products, processing over 3 billion litres of milk annually. The company collaborates closely with local farmers to produce and market premium food ingredients and consumer goods and is recognized for its commitment to innovation and sustainability.

CHALLENGE

Tirlán faced the challenge of enhancing employee engagement and optimizing processes across the organization. The company needed a unified strategy and system to manage performance effectively and identify areas for improvement. This challenge was compounded by the need to align diverse teams across different departments and geographic locations, especially within supply chain and operations.

SOLUTION

To address these challenges, Tirlán partnered with S A Partners to implement a comprehensive Lean and Continuous Improvement (CI) program. The initiative began with establishing a common purpose and strategy in collaboration with the Executive Leadership team, defining critical success factors and KPIs. A tiered management system, named 3M (Meet, Measure, Manage), was introduced to enhance performance management and engagement. The rollout occurred in phases, starting with manufacturing and operations, and was then extended to over 60 teams across the organization.

Key actions included:

1. Creating team purposes and strategies aligned to organizational goals.
2. Identifying critical success factors and KPIs to measure performance.
3. Prioritizing improvement projects for continuous process enhancement.
4. Setting up management review processes involving visual management and structured meetings.
5. Providing coaching support and developing a self-assessment and audit tool for ongoing improvements.

Case Study

15 Years of Excellence at Tirlán



RESULTS

The implementation of the 3M system and the broader Lean and CI approach led to significant improvements in process efficiency and employee engagement. Teams became more aligned with the company's strategic objectives, with clear KPIs and prioritized projects driving performance enhancements. The management review process and coaching support embedded a culture of continuous improvement, enabling Tirlán to maintain and build on these gains. The initiative successfully fostered a more cohesive and engaged workforce, with a robust framework for ongoing assessment and refinement.



“Glanbia Ireland has been working closely with S A Partners for many years. Recently, they have been supporting us with our Strategy Deployment framework. We had planned a really ambitious programme of work on this theme in 2020. As COVID 19 began to unfold, S A Partners worked closely with us to bring the strategy deployment program online. S A Partners ran the first virtual workshops and since then, Garry Corbett and Jeff Williams have successfully delivered over 100 different strategy deployment workshops with over 60, non manufacturing Glanbia teams.”

Michael Phelan (Head of Operations & Supply Chain)

Cultivating a Problem-Solving Culture at Worldwide Fruit

Worldwide Fruit Limited is an international fruit marketing and distribution company supplying the UK's largest supermarkets. Committed to sustainability and Lean principles, zero waste is a key strategic focus. Since 2011, they have worked with S A Partners to enhance their Lean practices. Their "grow our own" approach emphasizes training and development through the S A Partners belt system, affiliated with Cardiff University, ensuring alignment in objectives. In 2020, 200 improvement ideas were generated, with continuous improvements happening daily across the business.

CHALLENGES

Fresh fruit packaging and distribution is a highly competitive and challenging market. Product management and processing is subject to high levels of waste and the speed of turnaround required to ensure products reach supermarket shelves in optimum condition requires a highly scientific approach. This coupled with staff shortages and increasing pressure from supermarkets to reduce costs led Worldwide Fruit to embark on a Zero Waste agenda. Working with S A Partners they identified a program to build capability in Lean and Continuous Improvement.

KEY FOCUS AREAS

S A Partners supported the development of a Lean Training Academy which went on to deliver LCS Level 1A Lean Awareness Training to 100% of employees; and 38 LCS Level 1B Green Belt and their journey continues. This team also supported the development of a Model Line; the introduction of OEE as a key metric; Strategy Deployment through tiered meetings and the development of a new supplier framework.

Creating capability and building a culture of continuous improvement were fundamental to the deployment of the program. Whilst building lean and continuous improvement skills were important the company wanted to ensure that change was sustainable and the focus was on behaviors and not just tools.

Cultivating a Problem-Solving Culture at Worldwide Fruit

KEY ACTIONS:

1. Developed a Culture of Continuous Improvement
2. Identified critical success factors and KPIs to measure performance.
3. Prioritizing improvement projects for continuous process enhancement.
4. Trained 27 Green Belts & 5 Black Belts to support the use of Lean Tools & Techniques and enable the team to solve problems.
5. Provided coaching support and supported the development of Leader Standard Work across the entire operation.

IMPACT

As a result of this program of work and wider activities the company were the first fruit packing company in the UK to receive the coveted M&S Gold standard award. They were also able to demonstrate the following results:

- ROI of Lean Training: 1,334%
- Trapped benefit delivered by the Lean Business System and Enterprise Excellence Program: £3.327 million
- 59 hours of capacity created removing overburden
- Trained over 27 Green Belts, 5 Black Belts



The S A Partners Enterprise Excellence Model ®

“I’m incredibly proud of the team here at WFL who have enabled the business to achieve M&S Gold status. The support from S A Partners has been invaluable.”

Steve Maxwell, CEO

Case Study

TPM Deployment in a multinational Food & Drink manufacturer

Our customer is a household brand the manufactures both food and drink products. They invited S A Partners to support the deployment of a TPM program at one of their primary bottling sites.

CHALLENGES

Our customer recognised that in order to fulfill an increase in sales of one of their main product lines to retail customers they needed to improve productivity. They had achieved some significant improvements already through line optimization. This had been carried out to reduce product waste, reduce product giveaway and reduce manufacturing cost per kilo. Whilst this had improved and stabilised performance the rate of further improvement was proving to be a challenge.

SOLUTIONS

Together, we reviewed options with the team onsite and agreed that the next phase of their improvement journey would be a TPM programme. This programme would introduce the use of Overall Equipment Effectiveness to measure productivity and subsequent productivity improvements. We also agreed that there was a need to unlock the potential of the team and ensure that this drove engagement and ownership in both TPM and continuous improvement. This would ensure change was seen as a new way of life and not just a project based approach.



Case Study

TPM Deployment in a multinational Food & Drink manufacturer

KEY ACTIONS:

1. Developed a bespoke practical training intervention package (using the 70:20:10 training model) from scoping study to implementation for operatives to senior management.
2. Established a desired future state - a goal (this site wanted to increase from 7000 tons to 9000 tons per day)
3. Optimised the changeover process - to reduce time, reduce waste and remove variability.
4. Deployed a pilot program on the key main production line assets - this is currently being rolled out across the site.
5. Developed standards and aligned skills, ensuring knowledge was shared across the site.

IMPACT

As a result of this program of work we were able to see the following results:

- OEE went from 42% to 57% and this has been sustained.
- The pilot was successful and developed the capability to allow for a site wide rollout
- Champions were identified and upskilled to ensure program governance of the rollout and sustainability of the program in the longer term.
- Achieved milestone 1 on their journey towards their ultimate goal of ZERO accidents; defects; breakdowns and minor stops.



Together, the power to improve

S A Partners is a global consultancy & training company that works with customers on building Operational Excellence. We have been working with organizations in the Food & Drink sector for over 30 years.

As a company we strive to make a positive impact with our customers; our team and in the communities and environments in which we work.

Join our FREE virtual industry forums

LEAN FORUM - www.leanforum.co.uk

SHINGO FORUM - www.shingoforum.org

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www.sapartners.com

info@sapartners.com

