

Echelon Wins Gold, Syracuse University's Whitman School Proud to Play a Role

Syracuse University Professor Pat Penfield worked with company officials on improving workflow efficiencies that resulted in bottom-line growth.

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, February 2, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Echelon Supply and Service was recently recognized as a Gold recipient for Greater Rochester Quality Council (GRQC) Performance Excellence Award. This recognition was received due to Echelon achieving excellence through continuous improvement methodologies, which in part was the result of assistance from faculty at Syracuse University.

In May 2021 Echelon kicked off a Lean initiative, branded LeanForward[®], with the help of Syracuse University Whitman School of Management. Kevin Kilkelly, President of Echelon, wanted as many people as possible within his organization to be included with the LeanForward[®] initiative; thereby gaining buy-in and empowering the teams to strive for on-going continuous improvement and sustaining performance excellence. The organization rolled out Leadership, Yellow Belt and Green Belt training programs in addition to some 1-day Kaizen events. During the Green Belt training, 20 employees making up five different project times, participated in hands-on training of lean tools with real-time application of the tools to pre-identified projects. The projects were identified by the Leadership teams as having a direct and immediate impact on the organization achieving its strategic goals.

Although all the projects were hugely successful in terms of financial savings, customer satisfaction and improved internal efficiencies, one project stood out, FT/NT Production. In just over 4 months, the team applied the tools they learned in training, conducted a Kaizen event, created a focused factory, engaged and empowered the operators of the work cell resulting in an increase of production by 50% and improved on-time delivery by 90% !!! Not only were they able to preserve their number one client for this product line, but they were able to increase production capacity to obtain new business without having to incur any capital expenditure.

"The 'wow' improvement is the layout of the work cell and creating the focus factory," said Jamie Bratt, Production Quality Manager. "We applied the lean tools we learned in class to identify waste and optimized the process by creating a focus factory that took into consideration demand flow and balancing the line. This made it easier to produce more product with less waste of time and space, resulting in more completed and shipped orders which drastically improved our on-time delivery".

Kevin Kilkelly, President of Echelon added, "We quantify scrap in terms of dollars, but rarely do we think about all the time that is wasted daily doing tedious tasks that do not add value to the overall product or process efficiencies. Time is our most valuable resource, but because it is not sitting in a pile or bin, it is often overlooked. The FT/NT Production Team, early on in training, was able to identify the unseeable waste in the process flow. This has been a huge impact on customer satisfaction, revenue, and sales".

Other team members of the FT/NT Production Team echoed that the Green Belt training made them think differently about the processes of the operation, how each process interacts with each other and the impact of the outcomes. "The LeanForward® initiative taught our people how to do more with less, utilize the stakeholders, and that it takes a team of people, no matter what contribution they have, big or small, to make continuous improvement successful and part of our organization's DNA" added Mr. Kilkelly.

Dr. Patrick Penfield is available to help improve processes and a company's bottom line by contacting him at pcpenfie@syr.edu or 315-760-8544.

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