

Improvement Kata and Coaching Kata

The improvement thinking pattern in 2kg Cream Cheese filling and packing at Tatura Milk Industries

**Tatura Milk Industries – Cream Cheese
Oscar Roche, November 2013**



Brief

Improvement can often come largely from the resources currently available. It is not necessary to spend large sums of money. Smaller continual improvements can often be more successful than “silver bullets”. The Improvement and Coaching Kata’s are vehicles for achieving incremental change from within.

This case study provides background for Middle Managers on how challenges were met bit by bit over a period of months.

A production increase of 2kg blocks of Cream Cheese was required to meet increased sales demand. OEE was the key measure. “Q” and “P” targets were reached early via engaged operators.

An interesting aspect of the exercise was the overall positive response of the operators.

The biggest challenge undoubtedly was the need for the middle management “facilitators” to find the time to facilitate.

Source for information: [\[Tatura, Tatura Milk Industries, Dairy\]](#)

INTRODUCTION

Sales demand for 2kg blocks of Cream Cheese increased significantly. Throughput increase could come from the existing equipment and process; there was existing capacity.

The challenge was simple ... make best use of available resources.

CONTENT

The pathway was as follows:

1. Applied TWI Job Instruction (separate case study in its own right):
 - Reviewed downtime data, identified points where downtime root cause was variation in standard work.

- Developed “training blocks” – Job Instruction Breakdowns, training timetable.
 - Worked through training timetables applying the JI 4-Step method to each assigned skills.
2. Replaced “tonnage throughput” with OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) as the line performance measure:
- Clearly identified base parameters for Availability, Performance and Quality (“First Time Quality”).
3. Conducted an “Improvement Kata” workshop:
- Established the “Challenge” – OEE of 75% by June 2014.
 - Established “Target (Conditions)” for:
 - Availability (less focus due to being driven by management decisions).
 - Productivity (increased focus, driven by operator and leader actions).
 - Quality (high focus, driven by operator and leader actions, influenced by “There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all” *Peter Drucker.*)
4. Applied the Improvement Kata via the Coaching Kata:
- Set up a Coaching Kata visual board.
 - Trained the Production Manager then the Assistant Production Manager in the Coaching Kata.
 - Monitored and coached the Coaching Kata.

The agreed measures were:

- Frequency and stability of the Coaching Cycles.
- Number of “PDCA Tracking Forms” live at any one time.
- Progress toward Target Conditions.

The July 31 Targets for “Q” and “P” were reached, October ones set.

The following quotes came from Rob Sarkady, the Assistant Production Manager:

- “6 weeks ago at 1.15pm the 2 operators would nominate one to attend the review, the other to keep the line going. There was a rush to be the one to keep the line going. Nothing was said just now and both came to the coaching session at 1.15pm. I’ve done nothing to force that except be here every day at 1.15pm, and follow the process”.
- “At the start I’d say “Based on what we have learnt, what is our next step?” and there would be silence, and then I’d have to draw it out. Today I asked that question, both operators spoke up immediately, at the same time.”
- “By stating this target condition (pointing) and that obstacle, we actually uncovered another obstacle in what we learnt, and removed that one along the way.”
- “These guys are learning about our process along the way, the things we want and need to them to learn.”

CONCLUSION

Improvement Kata “thinking”, applied via the Coaching Kata, enabled goals to be met all the while building the knowledge and skills of those involved. The increase in knowledge and skills is directly aligned with operational needs – increased production from existing equipment.

