



“Lessons in Lean”

For some time, Diageo had been working on a McKinsey delivered ‘Perfect Plant’ Program. This global initiative was primarily aimed at Diageo’s management and had left behind a continuous improvement legacy. To maintain and build on that base, Diageo recognised that it needed to boost the core capabilities of its front line operations people working on the production lines – to build from the bottom up. What tools and techniques did the operatives need to learn and use? What were the optimal processes that could be put in place? What data was available to support those operatives on a continuous improvement journey? What shape would the training take?

Background

The Business Need

Les Aitken, Diageo’s Operations Manager at Shieldhall began the search for a training provider which could fulfil the need but quickly ran into issues. The key staff all worked on different shift patterns; how could they be released from existing duties without compromising production; how could any training benefits be made to stick, without it being viewed as a one-off initiative.

Les attended some of the early ‘Inter-Company Training’ clinics run by CeeD. This clinic addresses how companies can collaborate and share internal training programmes with each other and ‘best practice’ approaches to training. There, Les met Lorraine Dymond, Knowledge Transfer Officer at UWS and spoke to her about Diageo’s current needs and the constraints around which any provider had to work. Since the training on offer in the marketplace appeared formulaic and disjointed, Les was open to the University putting together a flexible programme which would exactly fit Diageo’s needs, without the content being necessarily specific to Diageo.

How CeeD helped

Results

Thanos Kourouklis (UWS Business School) and Michelle Cano (UWS School of Engineering and Science) are currently delivering a 12 week flexible “Introduction to Lean Manufacturing” programme to Diageo Shieldhall. Crucially all the training is taking place on Diageo’s site and is being delivered on both the early and back shifts, minimising disruption to the operation. The training sessions last for 3 hours for each shift and take place once per week. This means that the front line operations people can take their learning into the production environment and immediately begin the practical application of that learning.

“Parachuting staff into a training environment without context, support or the opportunity to apply

It works because...

that learning back into their work environment often means the benefits of that training are quickly forgotten, then lost,” comment Les. “This programme is about giving our people the tools they need to make a real difference where it matters and making that change stick. It’s about enhancing our core capabilities as a workforce and therefore our core capabilities as a production facility. The course content, timing and delivery methods all suit our operation here – but the lessons we’re learning could be applied anywhere.”