

## Case study

# Barkston Plastics Engineering Ltd

Based in Leeds, Barkston Plastics Engineering used MAS for expert help to identify and eliminate waste in its manufacturing administration processes and to introduce greater controls and measures to prepare its staff for increased production.

Established in 1969, Barkston Plastics provides a complete range of top quality industrial and engineering plastics to a wide variety of industries. The management team identified that its manufacturing processes had not been improved for many years and felt that this area could become a bottleneck as sales volumes increased. MAS specialist **Jeff Holt** was therefore invited to work with the company to tighten up its process controls and lay the foundations for future growth.



### Key Achievements

- > Projected savings of £75k p.a. have been identified.
- > Sales have been boosted by £150k p.a.
- > The accuracy of job sheets has been greatly improved.
- > The frequency of stock taking has been reduced.
- > A structured continuous improvement programme has now been established.
- > Employees have been empowered to come up with their own ideas for improving the way they work.

“MAS involved our employees in the project from the outset and between them they identified many areas where we could make significant improvements. Contained within the final report is an action plan that allows us to work through the 44 recommendations in terms of priority and to make sure that the changes happen.

Overall this has been a really worthwhile and cost-effective project that has added value to our business and has successfully involved our staff in the process.”

**Mark Carter**, Operations Directors

Provided by

“The involvement with **Jeff** really made me think about the parts of my job that could be improved. He genuinely considered all of my suggestions to improve the processes and enhance the efficiency of the company.”

## Philip Cloughton, Production Administrator

### How MAS helped

MAS's remit was to improve the manufacturing administration processes with a view to reducing wasted activity.

One of the major issues for the organisation, which had been highlighted during a recent Employee Engagement programme, was the inability of the administration team to match the aspirations of the production staff – leading to tensions between the two groups.

MAS specialist **Jeff Holt** therefore began the project by defining and charting the current processes, liaising with staff to ensure that all steps had been included. A series of process metrics were defined as a measure of the current position and to determine the degree of improvement possible.

Involving the workforce was key to ensuring that the process charts could be validated, and any areas where the system could be improved were highlighted.

A package of initial recommendations was circulated to both the administrative and production staff, allowing them to add further comments and to test out the feasibility of the proposals. The aim at this stage was to outline all the issues and determine the major aspects of the business that could be improved.

Following a series of informal meetings, the preliminary recommendations were then confirmed as working proposals that could be introduced.

The findings were then presented to the management team, along with an action plan for implementation. The action plan contained a priority ranking to ensure that the recommendations were implemented in the correct order and would therefore yield the anticipated benefits.

### Results

Using Six Sigma methodology, the MAS project successfully defined the organisation's key processes and metrics, and then removed any wasted activity.

The main focus however, was its people. Working with MAS allowed staff at Barkston to become involved in improving their own ways of working, and to make a valid contribution to improving their company as a whole. This was an opportunity that employees had not been given for many years, and has greatly boosted morale amongst the team.

The final project report detailed 44 recommendations, of which around half resulted in immediate bottom line benefits for the company.

Overall projected savings for the company are forecast to be around £75,000 per annum., which represents a 2.5% increase in productivity for the company as a whole and a 12:1 pay-back ratio for the project.



## Barkston Plastics Engineering Ltd

**Employees:** 50

**Location:** Leeds, West Yorkshire

**Manufactures:** Plastic stockholding & fabricator/machinist

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