



Ruston Electronics achieves 100% On Time Delivery in the face of increased demand

Key Achievements

- 100% on-time delivery
- Increased output by 50%

www.rustons.co.uk

Ruston Electronics Limited is a low to medium volume, high quality contract electronics design and manufacturer. Established in 1975 it now employs approximately 60 people situated on two sites in the centre of Luton in Bedfordshire.

“ Making use of available expertise is more important than ever for small businesses. Manufacturers have to not only survive in the current climate, keep fending off the competition from overseas but also put in the kind of capital investment required to meet changing regulation.”

Lynne Hobbs,
Operations Manager

The challenge facing Ruston was that on time delivery was beginning to slip due to increased demand. During the one-day review The East of England Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS East) worked with Ruston Electronics to identify the key causes as poor supply of parts, both from suppliers and internally, and poor factory layout, resulting in the factory being congested with work in progress

Though delivered quality was perfect, at inspection (right first time), it was only 73.6% and the Automated Test Equipment was unreliable. MAS East recommended a five-day

Kaizen blitz, which included team based problem solving. Lynne Hobbs, the Operations Manager, was keen to involve all the staff and MD David Houghton wanted to ensure that newly acquired problem solving skills could be spread through the rest of the business.

The overall aim of the work undertaken was to make the line flow smoothly. All 34 manufacturing staff involved were trained in 'Lean' basics. To gain buy-in, 18 staff who were directly effected, were taken to nearby Luton Airport for a half day learning about the seven wastes' with a Lego based JIT Game.

The team mapped the flow of work and then redesigned the factory layout to minimize travel and delay; balanced the work content at each station, copying an approach some had seen on a visit into the IBC van assembly plant.

Though shipments are weekly, the team installed a 'one piece flow line' that 'pulls' a product every eight minutes with minimal buffers in between. Staff can see and help at any bottleneck, therefore getting more through the whole line. On time delivery has remained at 100% ever since and they have taken on 50% more volume at the same time.

For further information contact MAS-East on **0845 300 4443** or e-mail info@mas-east.org.uk