

Newsletter **WORKPLACE CHALLENGE PROGRAMME**



the dtic

Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

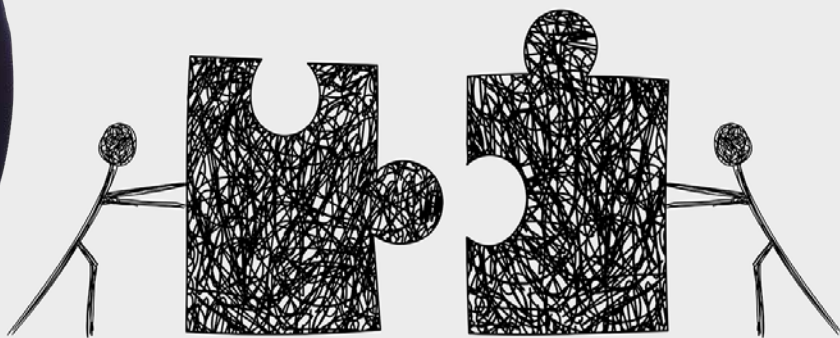
productivitysa
Inspiring a Competitive South Africa

NOVEMBER 2025 EDITION

Ms Amelia Naidoo
Acting CEO

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

COLLABORATION



As I welcome you to this edition of the Workplace Challenge Programme (WPC) newsletter, I would like to start with a quote that resonates with what the WPC is all about:

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

Indeed, collaboration is at the core of improving productivity and profitability in the workplace. Not only can we up productivity and profitability through workplace collaboration; we can also tackle South Africa's socio economic challenges such as unemployment.

Unemployment in South Africa is currently estimated at 59.6% for those aged 14-24 years and 40.5% for 25-34 years of age, respectively. Over and above the high

youth unemployment, it has become difficult for first-time employees to find work in the country. The barriers are no longer a lack of qualifications or even the level of qualifications. The country is faced with a situation whereby even job seekers with post graduate qualifications struggle to find jobs. As a result, the role of companies in various sectors, including manufacturing and agriculture, in job creation can never be over emphasised.

In this edition of the WPC newsletter, you will read about how collaboration saw two businesses improve their performance. One of our notable collaborative projects is the quality and productivity improvement (QPI Kaizen) project. In the case studies covered in this newsletter, you will read about how Limpopo Jewellery Business Incubator (LJBI) and Farm Fresh Chicken benefitted from the implementation of the QPI project.

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**Collaboration is at the core of
improving productivity and
profitability in the workplace.**

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

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The QPI (Kaizen) Project was established following a collaboration between the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (**the dtic**) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The project aims for nationwide dissemination of QPI (Kaizen) techniques for the industrial sector through a network of organisations that leverage on each other's strengths and knowledge. Please read the case studies to see how your business or company can benefit from this project.

As we head towards conclusion of the first quarter of 2025, it is exciting to see the WPC support a total of 101 businesses compared to a target of 100. The WPC Programme is progressing well towards attaining the targets of the 5-year Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with participation from potential clients, key stakeholders

in the different sectors, WPC's expert committee, **the dtic** Skills for the Economy Unit and Productivity SA.

The majority of companies are involved in manufacturing (40%), followed by those in agriculture (24%). Overall performance for the past year shows that twelve out of fourteen key performance indicators (KPIs) were achieved, resulting in a performance level of 86% by the programme.

I hope you enjoy the latest version of the WPC newsletter and derive value from the contents.

Ms Amelia Naidoo
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Productivity SA



Overall WPC Programme Performance

14
KPIs SET

12
KPIs ACHIEVED

86% OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Strong delivery across key performance areas.

Overall performance for the year shows that twelve out of fourteen key performance indicators (KPIs) were achieved, resulting in a performance level of 86% by the programme.

Limpopo Jewellery Business Incubator implements Kaizen to increase productivity

By Rose Morweng,
Senior Productivity Practitioner, Gauteng

Established in 2009, the Limpopo Jewellery Business Incubator (LJBI) operates as a premier jewellery design and manufacturing business incubator in Seshego, Polokwane, in the Capricorn District Municipality. Supported by the Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda) and the Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA), LJBI's mandate is to foster economic development by nurturing and supporting emerging enterprises.

It also fosters skills development by offering accredited training in jewellery design and manufacturing, primarily catering to persons from historically disadvantaged communities. The core objectives encompass the following:

- ◆ Provision of SMME business development support services;
- ◆ Delivery of technical skills training in jewellery design and manufacturing;
- ◆ Facilitation of market access for SMMEs;
- ◆ Execution of a sponsored learnership programme in jewellery design and manufacturing; and
- ◆ Providing operational co-working space for SMMEs.

The organisation remains committed to empowering local communities by providing skills transfer and employment opportunities for learners who have completed the Jewellery Design and Manufacturing Learnership Programme. These learners are subsequently retained and employed as workplace coaches and vocational trainers. Those with entrepreneurial aspirations are integrated into a business incubation programme, through which they receive business development services to grow and sustain their ventures.

Finally, the LJBI aims to reposition itself as a centre of excellence, striving to establish a strong and recognisable brand both domestically and internationally. Through its continued commitment to skills transfer, community empowerment and business development, the incubator seeks to solidify its reputation as a leading institution in the jewellery and business incubation sectors.

LJBI prides itself on offering the best handmade jewellery consisting of commercial jewellery, manufactured using low-end to high-end materials. The company offers the following products:

- ◆ Commercial jewellery - metal range;
- ◆ African range;
- ◆ Xibelani Jewellery collection; and
- ◆ Jewellery design, manufacturing and repairs.

Services offered include:

- ◆ SMME business development;
- ◆ Technical skills training;
- ◆ Manufacturing support;
- ◆ Access to market;
- ◆ Access to funding;
- ◆ Implementing sponsored learnership programmes; and
- ◆ Developing a jewellery trade test centre.

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CRAFTSMANSHIP



PRECISION



CREATIVITY



QUALITY



MATERIALS

Limpopo Jewellery Business Incubator implements Kaizen to increase productivity

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Challenge/s faced by the company and overarching project plan

LJBI started to implement the Kaizen programme in 2022. In 2024, the company requested that all newly hired staff members receive Kaizen refresher training. Lean tools were to be implemented with the goal of making sure that the Kaizen philosophy becomes an organisational culture.



Action taken Intervention 1: Baseline assessment

The management highlighted that since the implementation of Kaizen in 2022, there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the company and better communication among team members. In addition, the organisation has shown a great improvement in expected output. 90% of its strategic goals were achievable. There is also great teamwork which has had a positive impact on staff morale.

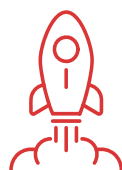
In 2024, the management requested Productivity SA to offer a refresher Kaizen programme to new employees and also to assess the effectiveness of the programme. During the meeting it was noted that there is a lack of quality assurance in the production/training department. There is no measuring tool which determines the level of learners' satisfaction rate with regard to the programmes offered to them. Learners, as the internal customers of LJBI, need to give effective feedback to the workplace coaches so that they can improve and close all gaps identified.

The management explained that there are so many delays that happen during manufacturing because of lack of a proper storeroom for tools. During the Gemba walk it was discovered that the storeroom is not well organised, with tools lying around haphazardly.



LJBI Kaizen team 2024

Philip Mailula, Tshunxekani Mayila, Puleng Mabokane, Charles Lapane, Dipuo Ndaza and Tshepo Nkuna.



Action taken Intervention 2: Capacity building

Productivity SA implemented a Kaizen programme, which entails conducting a Kaizen tools and capacity building workshop and Implementation of identified projects. Coaching and review of the programme follows implementation, to ensure that the interventions are sustainable. A Kaizen team was selected consisting of management and staff. The following concepts are covered in the Kaizen programme.

- ◆ Value vs waste
- ◆ Kaizen toolkits
- ◆ The basic tools: 5S and visual management
- ◆ How does a production operation work?
- ◆ The levels of Improvement in a company
- ◆ Finding and eliminating waste
- ◆ The ten steps for making improvements
- ◆ Company-wide Kaizen

- ◆ Investigating the situation
- ◆ Finding solutions
- ◆ Recommendations for improvements
- ◆ Presentation of improvement suggestions
- ◆ Implementation of improvement suggestions

LJBI embraced the Kaizen philosophy to build a more professional organisational culture and promote a strong work ethic among employees. Accordingly, eight staff members, drawn from various departments in the organisation, were nominated to represent the organisation regarding all Kaizen activities.

LJBI embraced the Kaizen philosophy to build a more professional organisational culture.



Action taken

Intervention 3: 5S Implementation in the production storeroom

Problem statement: The learners in the production department wasted time searching for various tools in the storeroom which affects production times.

Activity: Reduce searching time of tools from 60min to 5min by implementing 5S in the production storeroom.

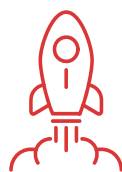


Improvement% = $\frac{\text{Search minutes after Kaizen}}{\text{Search minutes before Kaizen}} \times 100$

Search minutes before Kaizen

= $60 \text{ min} - 5 \text{ min} \times 100$

60 minutes = 91.67% improvement



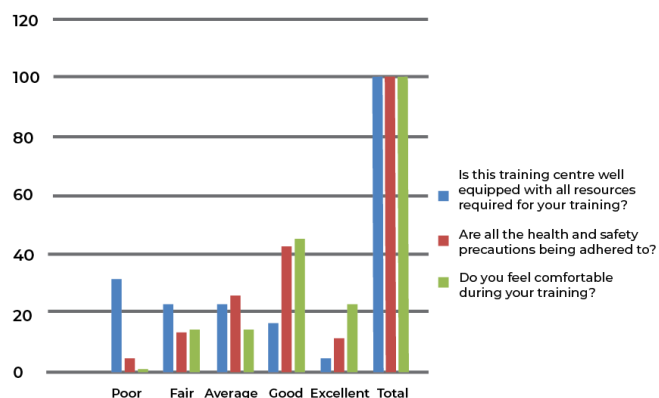
Action taken

Intervention 4: Learning Evaluation Survey

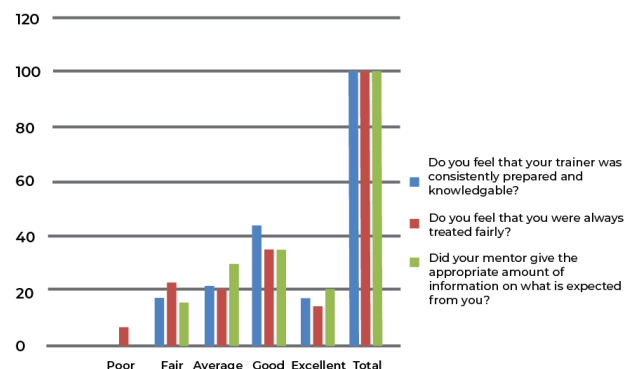
Evaluation forms: The evaluation forms were designed and finalised with the primary objective of streamlining assessments, ensuring consistency and fostering fairness. The forms were disseminated to the learners, data was collected, and a learner survey was compiled.

The introduction of standardised evaluation processes has ensured equitable assessments across the board. This system has improved transparency and provided measurable insights into learner performance and feedback. There is documented evidence of this initiative, including finalised evaluation forms, data collection reports, and the compiled learner survey presentation. This initiative has improved the organisation's capacity for fair assessments, driving more accurate performance evaluations and fostering greater trust among learners and staff.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME



ABOUT THE TRAINERS/MENTORS



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Limpopo Jewellery Business Incubator implements Kaizen to increase productivity

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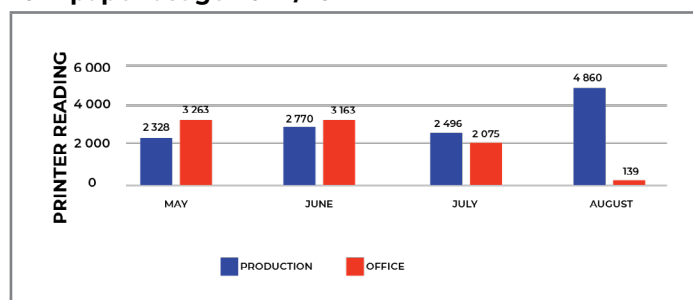


Action taken

Intervention 5: Minimise paper wastage

The Kaizen team established a paper usage tracking system, prominently displayed on a notice board, to monitor paper consumption levels. This visual dashboard enables the organisation to track usage trends in real time, identify potential threshold breaches and implement timely interventions to reduce consumption. The graph illustrates the actual paper usage per department for each month (blue represents our production department and orange represents our office department). Each department is given a limit of 3 000 papers per month.

LJBI paper usage 2024/25



Action taken

Intervention 6: Improving staff morale

Idea 1: Newsletter

The Kaizen team drafted and published a newsletter to share organisational updates and achievements. The newsletter has played a vital role in keeping all employees informed and engaged with the organisation's progress, ensuring that everyone is up to date on the latest development and events across all departments. Through the newsletter the organisation has fostered a culture of transparency and open communication, enabling employees to stay informed and connected with the organisation's achievements, initiatives and milestones.

Idea 2: Suggestion box

The Kaizen team installed a suggestion box to encourage learner feedback and ideas, promoting a culture continuous improvement. This initiative enables the team to collect insightful recommendations on enhancing process and services, review and implement feasible suggestions and enhance the overall learning experience of students, prioritising comfort and productivity.



Idea 3: Social well-being calendar

The team created a social well-being calendar, outlining initiatives and activities to support employee mental health and work/life balance. By showcasing the organisation's social activities and events, the social well-being calendar aims to foster a sense of community and teamwork, promote work/life balance and employee well-being and encourage participation and engagement in organisational activities.

Month	Event name	Proposed date	Achievement
May	Mother's Day promotion	5 May 2024	We had a competition for Mother's Day and people participated and unfortunately we had no winner.
June	Open day celebration	5 June 2024	We had a wonderful open day celebration at our centre. The following stakeholders attended the event: Nedbank, University of Limpopo, Department of Public Works, LJBI Board, Anglo American. All learners and staff attended the event.
July	Nelson Mandela Day	18 July 2024	We visited Grace and Hope Special School to celebrate with them. These are the activities we performed: helping in the kitchen and cleaning classrooms.
July	Activity for staff morale	5 July 2024 12 July 2024	We organised staff morale activities which were playing pool at our chill zone. We formed teams and had a winning team. These activities brought positive vibes and happy faces amongst all staff.
August	Women's month celebration	5 August 2024	We organised a women's day celebration in the workplace. We offered our women a free car wash. These are the other activities we had: playing pool and ask a man to sing along.
September	Heritage Day celebration	20 September 2024	Still in progress
December	Christmas Day	Date TBC	

Tangible results

The impact measures are reflected in the table:

Objective	Activity	Indicators	Baseline (numbers)	Target	Impact (numbers)
Improve quality of learning provided to learnership programme	Review evaluation form and track customer satisfaction rate	◆ Learner evaluation forms	70%	95%	25%
Minimise copy paper	Review and track number of papers used in a month	◆ Efficiency ◆ Wastage	3 000 copies/month	1 000 copies/month	33%
Implement 5S and improve searching time for production tools	Kaisen tool (5S Methodology)	◆ Efficiency ◆ Quality ◆ Wastage	60 min	5 min	96%

Conclusion

- ◆ Significant process improvements and a culture of continuous improvement have been established;
- ◆ Employee motivation and commitment to the company's success have increased;
- ◆ Kaizen has fostered collaboration and innovation among LJBI's workforce;
- ◆ Employees have been empowered to take ownership of their work and make meaningful contributions; and
- ◆ LJBI is committed to ongoing Kaizen programme implementation and development for continuous improvement and competitiveness.

Productivity Efficiency Programme benefits Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers

By Mxolisi Coki,
Senior Productivity Practitioner, Western Cape

Company profile

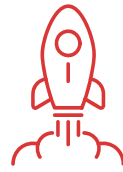
Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers has been in operation for almost 40 years. Founded in 1986, Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers operates in the grocery and related product merchant wholesalers industry. Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers is part of the wholesale trade sector, specifically dealing with poultry and poultry products. It serves the needs of clients through a dedicated team of sales and administrative staff, in conjunction with a delivery network of 15 vehicles that handle loads of 50kg to 50 tonnes of product. One of their key projects was the consolidation of their off-site storage rentals into one site adjacent to their current location.

Challenge/s faced by company and overarching project plan

Farm Fresh Chicken was looking for an opportunity to train and develop its workforce while strengthening the leadership base in the company. Farm Fresh Chicken consulted Productivity SA after noticing some behavioural changes that could be improved and this led the company to seek help from productivity experts.

The concerned company leadership wanted to build staff and empower them to stop neglecting planned work, exercising poor time management and allocation of daily tasks and a lack of accountability.

Productivity SA's Productivity Efficiency Programme was identified as an opportunity to help Farm Fresh Chicken to enhance productivity, empower its team, and streamline its operations which could help it optimise operations and processes, reduce costs and improve efficiency. The productivity improvement programme was implemented in Farm Fresh Chicken for a period of eight months in 2024.



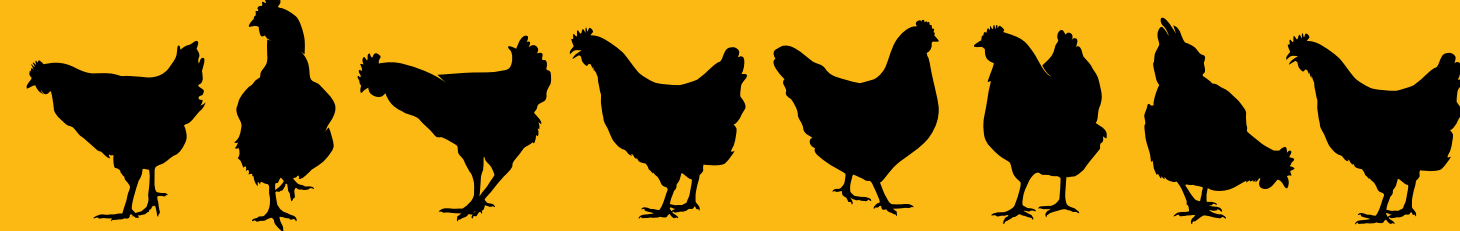
Action taken

Intervention 1: Baseline assessment

The recommendations outlined are in line with the findings found during the business study sessions that were conducted and are developed with respect to the following constraints:

- ◆ Process mapping for all departments;
- ◆ Standard operating procedures agreed on and designed (at least one department);
- ◆ 5S introduction and implementation to organise the workplace;
- ◆ Improved visual display of key performance indicators (KPIs) measures and workstations, daily tasks; and
- ◆ Team meetings design.





Action taken

Intervention 2: Capacity building

The commitment to learning was evident with the completion of the homework after each training session. Staff were initially very reserved but later were enthusiastic and asked a lot of questions.

Training modules are listed below.

Modules	Topics
Module 1	An introduction to Kaizen
Topics	Objectives
	Scope
	Selection criteria
	Kaizen Programme overview
	Process analysis
	A3 problem solving and reporting
	Implementation plan
	Impact Analysis (KPIs)
Module 2	What is value?
Topics	Value-added, Non value-added but necessary and Non value-added
	The Conversation process (Production)
	The operation function
	Why Kaizen?
	Continuous improvement - The ten steps
	Understand the activities in the area
	Processes are everywhere
Module 3	7 Wastes and 8 Downtime Wastes
Topics	7 Wastes
	8 Downtime Office Wastes
	Decide what measures to use (KPIs)
Module 4	5S and problem solving: Fishbone, Pareto, Brainstorming and PDCA
Topics	5S
	Value-adding, Non Value- adding but necessary and Waste (Time bar)
	Problem Solving - Fishbone Diagram
	Problem Solving - Pareto Diagram
	Problem Solving - Brainstorming
	Problem Solving - PDCA
Module 4	Communication, Personality Traits, Mini Businesses and Competence
Topics	Effective Communication
	Communication between levels
	Personality types
	Mini Businesses
	Skills and Skills Matrix
	Competency

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Productivity Efficiency Programme benefits Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers

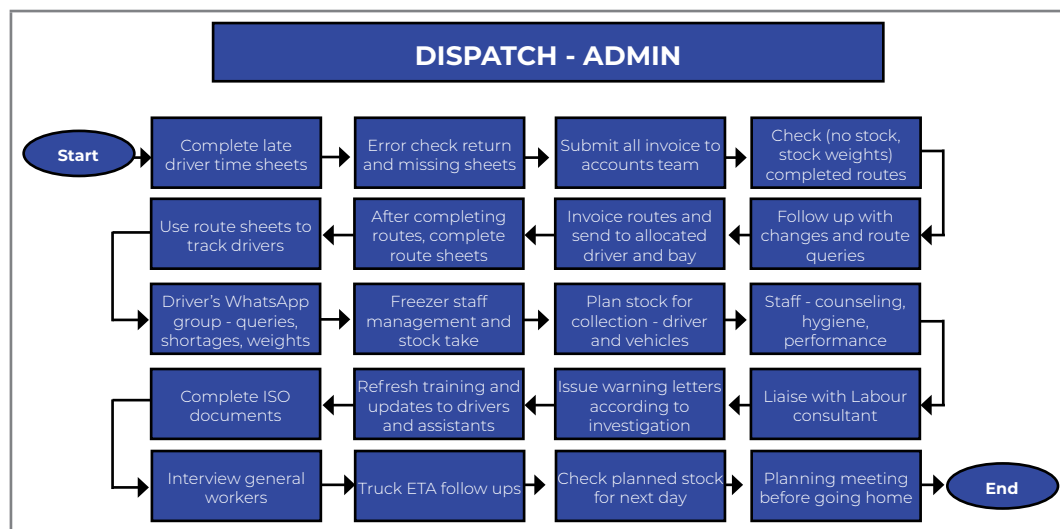
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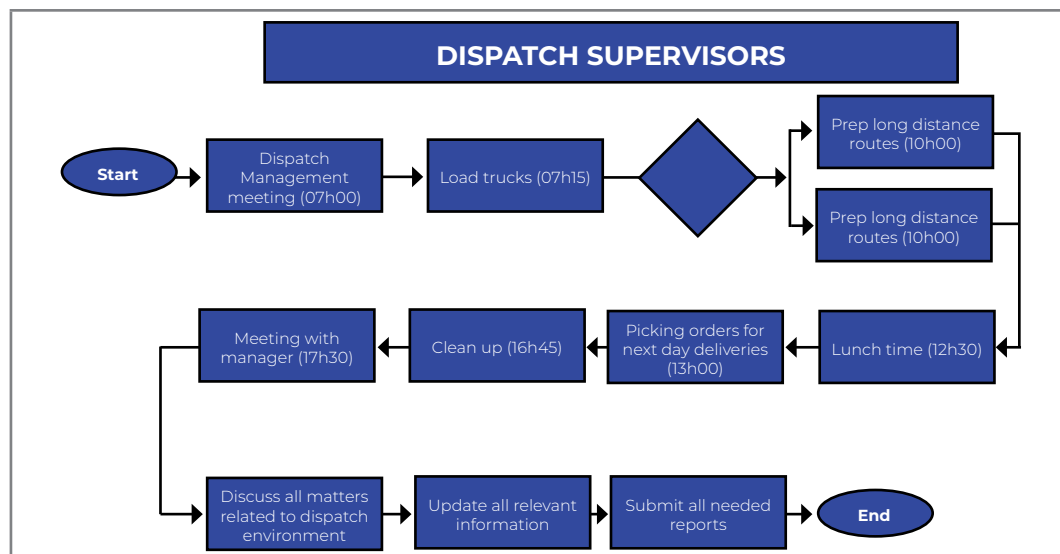
Action taken

Intervention 3: Process flow mapping

The dispatch department runs a two shift pattern an hour apart to ensure that the daily work is completed. One of the shifts finishes later in the day so that all daily activities including delayed truck deliveries and returns can be captured.

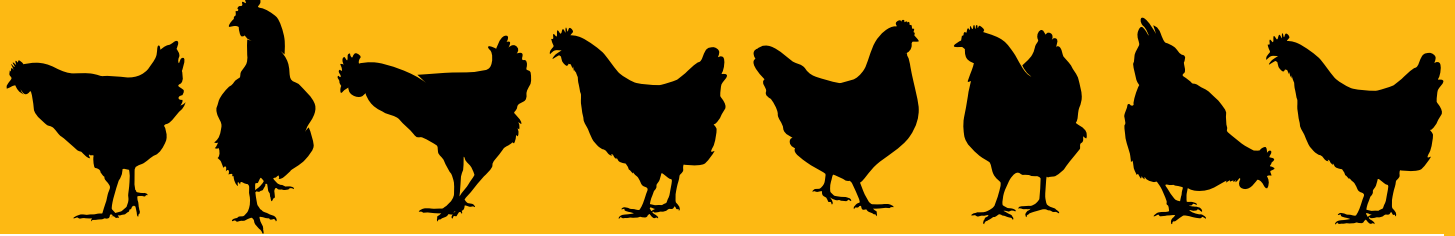


The process flow above also includes human and industrial relations activities that need to be carried out.



The dispatch supervisor manages activities following a set routine as seen above.





Action taken

Intervention 4: 5A and organised workplace



Figure 1: Dispatch worktable area cupboard doors installed to keep area organised



Figure 2: Dispatch cupboard top with clutter removed, creating better access to the first aid kit box and the sealer.

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Productivity Efficiency Programme benefits Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers

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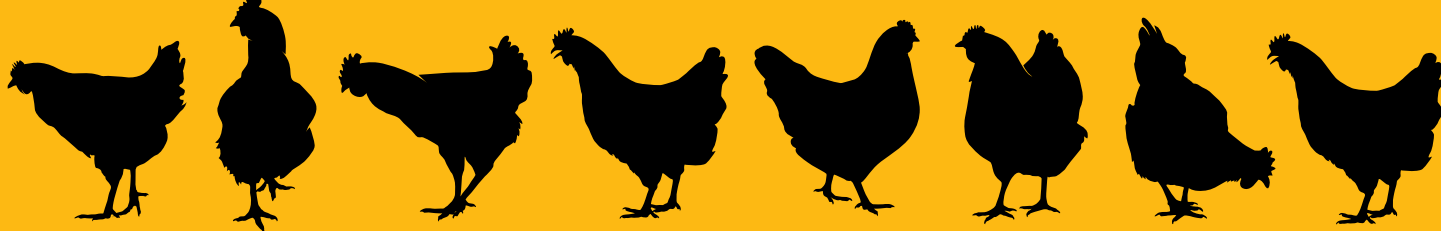


Action taken

Intervention 5: Root cause analysis

Sometimes incorrect products are delivered to customers. The dispatch and sales team worked on this problem together and solved it using the Ishikawa.





Action taken

Intervention 6: KPI tracking and visual management

A visual management system did not exist in the company. After a few engagements, KPIs were identified and implemented. The visual management charts show the daily recording of the KPIs.

Tangible results

Strong improvement in the quality objective is attributed to the concerted team-based problem solving that was and is still being done by teams. This setup leads to the experts in their areas factually discussing the problems on hand and the team coming up with a solution together.

Objective	Activity	Indicators	Baseline (numbers)	Target	Actual May	Actual June	Actual July	Actual August	Actual September	Impact (numbers)
Quality	Understand and reduce complaints	Customer complaints	60%	80%	80%	80%	77%	75%	89%	48%
Cost	Manage costs	Unplanned overtime	90%	98%	85%	60%	88%	90%	98%	9%
Delivery	On time delivery	On time production	95%	98%	75%	96%	99%	97%	98%	3%
Safety	Safety awareness	Number of incidents and accidents	80%	50%	100%	70%	60%	70%	93%	16
Morale	Reduce absence through engagements	Attendance	90%	98%	70%	97%	95%	97%	100%	11%

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Productivity Efficiency Programme benefits Farm Fresh Chicken Wholesalers

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Conclusion

The Kaizen project at Farm Fresh Chicken has been an important step in fostering a culture of continuous improvement in the business. The team showed remarkable resilience and commitment to learning and applying Lean principles despite operational challenges.

The following key points highlight the progress and outcomes:

- ◆ Workplace organisation through 5S;
- ◆ Overcoming implementation challenges; and
- ◆ Adoption of continuous improvement culture

Overall, the Kaizen project at Farm Fresh Chicken demonstrated the potential of structured process improvement to drive meaningful change in business operations. Despite initial resistance and challenges, the team's adaptability and the continuous coaching provided have positioned Farm Fresh Chicken for ongoing success. The foundation has been laid for future improvements, with a focus on sustaining the Lean principles learned during this project. With further application, the business can expect long-term benefits in efficiency, employee satisfaction, and overall performance.



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