

# Case Study

Achieving high performing self-sufficient factories

## Improving Production Flow with

Simple solutions create significant improvements

### Background

LI Europe were asked to work with a light engineering business who needed to improve production flow, reduce inventory and improve workplace organisation. One of the things we identified was the lack of workstation organisation. Nothing was standardised, workstations were cluttered, and there was a lack of consistency in how things were done.

### Pilot Area

We decided to pilot 5S in the fabrication area, which was central to the factory. We then trained six team members in the principles of 5S, explaining how to apply it and how to ensure its continued success.

## Implementing

### **SORT**

We created a Red Tag area for items that weren't required, damaged or we didn't know what they were used for. Some items were put back into stores or scrapped. In total we tagged 56 items, which was quite a surprise for such a small area.

### **STANDARDISE**

Once we had set the area to a good standard, we asked other members of the production team to critique the new layout, shadow boards, re-order levels, etc. We asked them if the setting techniques we had implemented would work in their areas. Mostly feedback was good but some changes and improvements were suggested and implemented, mainly around colour coding lubricants and grinding wheels.

### **SUSTAIN**

The most important part of any improvement project, not just 5S, is sustainability. To embed the behaviours a weekly auditing process was created. Initially, it was an audit carried out by the area manager against criteria under each of the 5S steps. As we progressed the 5S program throughout the factory, the audits moved away from being a manager responsibility to becoming an operator task. Operators from each area audit a different area within the factory every week, with scores being posted on a central board. This has provided a level of healthy competition within the site, with each area vying to be the best area within the site.



# Case Study

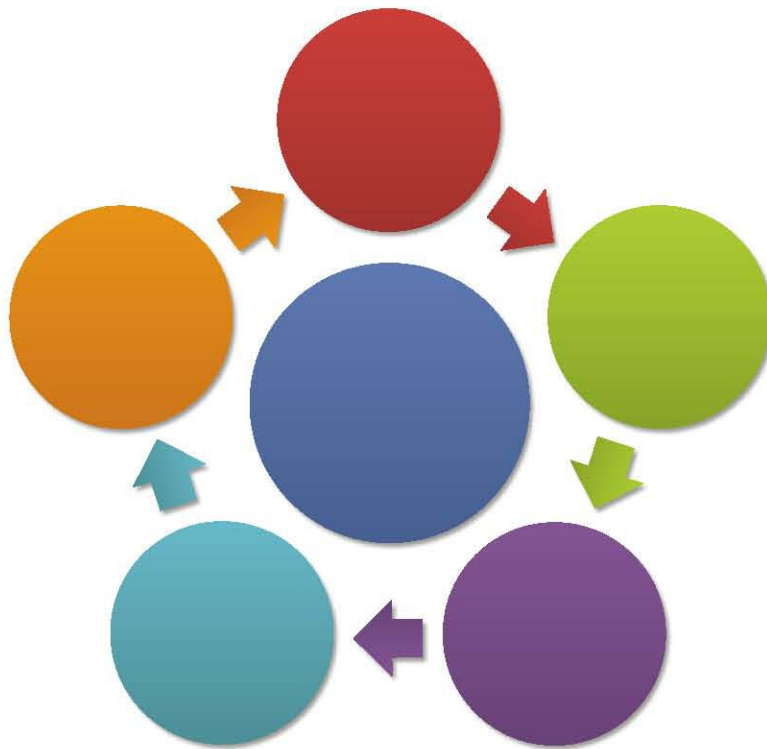
## Achieving high performing self-sufficient factories

### STANDARDISE

The next step was to get feedback from colleagues and standardise the process. Unless everyone is adhering to the new way of working, the change will not be sustainable.

### SUSTAIN

Perhaps the most important step in the 5S process, the new standards must become “the way we work”. To embed the changes, we implemented an auditing process. This encouraged all colleagues to use the new system and be accountable for ensuring its success.



### Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is exactly what the phrase suggests – continuous. Now that the 5S principles have been taught and successfully applied to one area of the organisation, the team can continue to use this approach to make improvements in other areas. This relatively straightforward approach delivers significant change and the increase in productivity over time will more than repay the investment of time spent implementing the methodology.