

Case Study

Strategic Business Development & Support Ltd helped Leicestershire company to improve its manufacturing processes through Lean implementation.

Leicestershire based steel valve manufacturer, Velan Ltd, contacted Strategic Business development & Support (SBD&S) for help with improving efficiency, work ethics and introducing continuous improvement.



“You need to bring in an expert like Adrian to assist with the successful implementation of an improvement project.”
Sudhir Jaycee, General Manager, Velan Ltd

“Velan had already implemented Lean and Six Sigma techniques into their American and Canadian plants; they now wanted support to successfully implement these techniques into their UK plant.”

Adrian Martin, Strategic Business Development & Support Ltd.

Velan Ltd is one of the world's leading manufacturers of industrial steel valves with specialized manufacturing plants in Canada, USA, Europe and Asia. Velan is one of the largest manufacturers of industrial steel gate, globe and check valves, operating their plants on a stand-alone policy where each plant has to make its own profits and balance its own books. The Velan plant in Leicester produces two main types of valve; steam traps and bonnetless Globe valves. These valves are supplied for a broad range of applications in the power generation, chemical and petrochemical, oil and gas, pulp and paper, mining, cryogenic, and ship-building industries.

Velan Ltd.'s UK President, Rob Velan, approached the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) East Midlands when there was a need for improvement at the Leicester plant. General Manager, Sudhir Jaycee explains: "There was a need to improve efficiency and work ethics within the business to allow it to become profitable and be a sustainable working site. There was also a need to increase production capacity within the current facility and also to reduce lead times and work in progress using lean techniques."

Adrian Martin, performed a review of the company and found that there was scope for support "From our discussions, we offered a proposal for the implementation of productivity improvement and the setting up of an internal (TPI) total process improvement team within Velan Ltd."

The project, went ahead and provided 20 days of 5 month period. Sudhir Jaycee, describes the project: "There was continuous improvement training for all personnel within the business to allow everyone to take on board the idea of changing how they work. The personnel within the business took ownership of their own work areas and began to implement improvements in their own areas as part of the process. The project facilitated the introduction of new working practices to include one-piece-flow."

There was an immediate impact as Sudhir highlights: "There was a 17% increase in overall efficiency in the production processes and a reduction of 30% in the duration of response to customers. There used to be a 12 week lead, it was reduced to an 8 week lead time. In addition, the production process has become more flexible and responsive."

As a direct result of the support provided by Adrian, 23 jobs were safeguarded and 8 new jobs were created at Velan Ltd. It was estimated that the project generated £2,000,000 worth of new business, resulting in an increase in profit of £500,000. Sudhir Jaycee describes the importance of accessing public sector support: "As a business you can't do this on your own. You need to bring in an expert like Adrian to assist with the successful implementation of an improvement project. The sooner the better to develop a plan of implementation."