

Beyond the Stopwatch

Work measurement proves key to improving truck production rates.

The Continuous Improvement Department at one of Paccar's leading truck manufacturing plants is seeing results from their Kaizen related efforts. They have initiated their own system named HIKE, an acronym for High Impact Kaizen Event. Their goal is to double the amount of trucks that they manufacture in a day, by optimizing their resources while maintaining excellence in quality performance.

As part of their improvement project, they needed to know the precise amount of time being spent on non value adding tasks at each assembly station, in order to optimize their operation.

The Problem:

At this plant, in Montreal, work measurement studies used to be done the traditional way with a stop watch and a paper form to evaluate value added and non value added tasks during their process. "We needed a better system," explains Sylvain Belisle, IE, Senior Production Coordinator. "When we were using stop watches it was very hard to collect task times, having to hold the stopwatch and write the information at the same time. The results were not accurate, and the data collection was not easy."

The Solution:

After researching their possibilities, the Continuous Improvement Department opted to invest in UmtPlus™, the highest quality work measurement tool that leverages handheld computers. This

software, developed by Laubrass, facilitates and optimizes the data collection process.

After customizing their study to suit their needs, five handheld computers were uploaded with the required information and given to employees. After a mere two hours of training, they were sent into the plant where they evaluated some 70 assembly workers in just three days. "Now with UmtPlus, it's simple, you just need to click on the appropriate icon and your time is logged," says Belisle.

The Result:

Once the tasks have been accurately timed on the PDA, the results are uploaded to the computer without having to do any data entry, "it's so simple," says Belisle.



Another benefit of using the software that Belisle has noticed is that the employees on the assembly line prefer to see the PDAs rather than a stop watch. "It's easier to demonstrate that we are just aiming to reduce the non value added activities in our assembly operation to improve efficiency. It's not as intimidating as the stopwatch system."

"Using UmtPlus has made our work measurement process easier and definitely more accurate," concludes Belisle. Using the data from the UmtPlus™ work measurement studies, this manufacturing plant has been able to identify where to implement solutions, ultimately increasing their productivity.

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