

Delivering Business Benefits Employer Champion Jackson & Keay Ltd

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The Sector Skills Council
for Science, Engineering and
Manufacturing Technologies



Business benefits through skills investment

Business-Improvement Techniques (B-IT) enables businesses in the manufacturing industry of any size, to benefit from reduced costs, minimal waste and improved productivity. Employees are empowered to improve quality, cost and delivery and ensure that these improvements are sustained.

It is techniques such as B-IT and Lean Leadership that allow a business to improve both their productivity and profitability.

Like many companies in the industry, Jackson & Keay Ltd have also adopted these techniques, enabling them to stay competitive.

The company

Jackson & Keay Ltd makes pressure equipment including drums, tubes and multi-element gas containers. It provides a full and flexible service to its clients incorporating regular examination and testing, cylinder supply (new or re-conditioned), filling services and engineering solutions for pressure systems.

With a site in Nottingham and a special gas plant in the North West, Jackson & Keay has been established for almost 30 years and employs approximately 50 people. Current annual turnover is around £3.5 million.

Group Operations & Commercial Director: The change driver

From his broad experience in manufacturing, engineering and previous roles in mining, power generation and steel, Neil Bradshaw knows the benefits of implementing lean and business-improvement techniques.

Neil joined Jackson & Keay as Group Operations Director in 2005 and developed his role to head up the commercial and operations functions. He has an MBA and a strong background in operations and management. During his career in mining, Neil was awarded with the prestigious National Presidents Award for his contribution to the industry in 1998. Neil has also presented to the Department of Trade and Industry Ministers at the House of Lords on how the introduction of B-IT improved bottom line for Jackson & Keay.

Investment in B-IT and Lean Leadership brings success

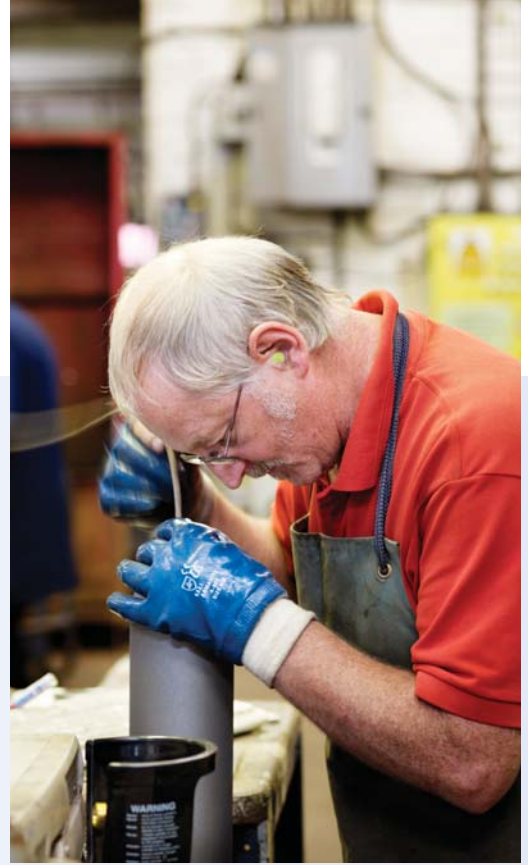
Neil has mentored the front line management team, restructured and put the new team through NVQ & VRQ Levels 2 & 3 in B-IT. In doing so, Neil has increased productivity by 25%; turned static revenue stock into profit and the workforce has become multi-skilled through training and development. As a result staff attendance has also gone up from 67% to 97% and staff morale is high. This has been achieved through introducing monthly reviews and appraisals.

A focus on continuous improvement

Maintaining and increasing its income streams and its customer base is one of the key challenges for Jackson & Keay. Adopting a more productive culture and becoming operationally excellent are also high priorities.

“Through participating in Semta's B-IT programme our organisation has continually improved and is in a very competitive position. Employees' improved skills have enabled the business to increase bottom line.”

Neil Bradshaw
Group Operations &
Commercial Director,
Jackson & Keay Ltd



Neil says:

"In the past, we've had great difficulty in meeting our challenges. Continuous improvement was not easy. Amongst other things, our culture also needed to improve and there were weaknesses in the skillset of our front-line management. We also had administrative challenges. In addition, we recognised that we had a high turnover and that we needed a stable workforce."

Neil was referred to Semta by the East Midlands Manufacturing Advisory Service, although he had an awareness of Semta from his work with other SMEs (Small to Medium Sized Enterprises).

Neil continues: "We involved the whole company in the changes. Firstly, we restructured the management team and then accessed a number of short courses delivered by Derby College/Rolls-Royce CoVE. Following on from this, we involved the whole workforce in implementing 5S (business improvement activity) and ran continuous improvement programmes including Kanban and Kaizen exercises."

The commitment made by the company included purchasing additional short courses in lean manufacturing, paying overtime to staff, creating a new training room and developing training materials. As part of its continuous improvement programme, the company also developed its own production control and visual management system (VJC). This allowed time for seven key employees to participate in B-IT NVQ Level 2.

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Current improvements guide vision for the future

From the implementation of B-IT significant improvements have been achieved by Jackson & Keay:

- Cost reductions including site overheads, labour and overtime.
- Machine maintenance and investing in better equipment has resulted in improved equipment efficiency.
- Working conditions are now much better.
- There is more accountability for work and process flow has improved.
- The company's purchase system and document management is much more efficient.
- Improved customer relations.
- Designed, developed and implemented lean principles.
- The company is now able to analyse the benefits of training its staff, through Quality Cost and Delivery (QCD) measures for example.

Neil explains,

"This whole process has made us much more competitive.

- Lead times have improved significantly, with the time required to produce 2000 units now reduced from 100 hours to just 48 hours.
- Operating costs have dramatically reduced.
- Profit, turnover, order volumes and customer retention have all increased."

Jackson & Keay is now continuing its lean journey working with the National Skills Academy for Manufacturing on a programme of activity to secure further improvements across the business moving forward.