

## PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

By undertaking the renowned FIRA Process Improvement Workshop in its frame assembly operation, **DFS** has achieved the following improvements:-

People Productivity up 15%  
 Frame kitting 'right first time' up 96%  
 Delivery on Time to Upholstery up 64%

which has led to an increase in Turnover of 300K within the same facility and the same number of people.

**Client feedback** - *"FIRA's Lean programme has shown measurable savings. We are delighted at the impact it has had and are very pleased that we took the decision to bring FIRA's expertise to bear upon our manufacturing organisation."*

**Jon Massey, Chief Operating Officer, DFS**

### Background

DFS is Britain's leading upholstery manufacturer and retailer. It uses a mixture of external and internal suppliers to produce upholstery for its stores around the UK and is constantly looking to improve its business in all areas. So they approached FIRA to introduce the concept of Lean within the frame assembly plant.

### Objectives

Objectives for the activity were defined as:

- Increase productivity and turnover.
- Remove 'waste' from the process.
- Reduce Kitting errors.
- Improve 'delivery on time' to Lincoln house
- Start culture change on shop floor to own and drive improvements.

### The action

A process improvement team was selected to undertake a process improvement workshop which was facilitated by FIRA engineer, Bruce Lovell. This consisted of wood machinists, frame assemblers as well as a kitter, despatch supervisor and assistant manager. Baseline measures were identified for delivery on time, downtime, people productivity, floor space utilisation and kits delivered that were not right first time to assemblers.



- By creating kitting checklists and reducing batch sizes, delivery and right first time were dramatically improved.
- The first stage of the process focussed on waste identification by videoing the whole process. This enabled the team to quantify wasted time and develop an action plan to eliminate waste.
- The team found 1.5hrs lost per day due to set up and decided the solution was to kit onto a trolley and deliver in the format required to negate any set up. A trolley was trialled which proved set up time could be reduced by 62%.
- To accommodate the movement of these trolleys around the shop floor the layout was changed.

**Engineer feedback** - *"Even though productivity is up, the whole facility is better organised and everyone seems calmer, due to the reduction in firefighting."*

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