Food Manufacturer Reduces Waste by Over 70% in Six Weeks

Multi-plant pizza and mushroom manufacturer gains visibility into production processes and generates 70-80% reduction in waste and overfill in 6 weeks.

Current Way of Working Was Perceived as Good Enough

Dan Wadyka, Assistant Director of Quality Control at Giorgio Foods, was caught between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, new company leadership was pushing for major growth and change. On the other, some managers and supervisors felt that the current way of working was good enough.

Wadyka saw an opportunity to support the growth initiatives of the leadership and galvanize support for these initiatives among middle management.

Production workers track product weights on the production line for frozen pizzas. These checks were recorded on paper, and the supervisor calculated average weight throughout the shift to maintain control of the product. At the end of each day, the data collection sheet was replaced and the completed form was collected for sign off and storage.

This manual process meant that line supervisors were only concerned with the current production run. If problems arose, managers spent hours and hours compiling hand-written data from pieces of paper before they could begin to make sense of what happened. Since the data was not in front of them, no one really knew the true impact on the business until it was too late to fix the issue.

Process reviews and approvals might be delayed for days. Management could not evaluate performance in a timely manner. Everyone had opinions about what should be improved to meet their growth goals, but no one had clear evidence.

Good Enough Is No Longer Acceptable

This situation was considered normal and "good enough" by supervisors. No one knew the impact or true cost of the legacy approach. Wadyka had an intuition that the impact was significant and that it was inhibiting the growth of the business.

In fact, the lack of timely information did not allow for impactful insights into production processes. While management attempted to analyze situations on the fly, more often than not a product that did not meet specifications would be discarded as waste, or over-loaded with extra toppings. Blue waste containers proliferated, spilling over into aisles and walk ways.

The cost of goods sold from the waste and overpack were very high, but were considered normal and acceptable.

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>
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> Assistant Director of Quality
> Giorgio Foods

Culture Needs to be Transformed

No one had a clear understanding of how to solve the problem. Wadyka said, "We were not a waste reduction culture. For example, a 12 oz. pizza would weigh about 14oz when it ships."

Wadyka had a mandate to drive change, but was extremely frustrated. To build momentum for change he knew he had to appeal to his colleague's heads and hearts, and to do that he needed data. He realized that since his team did not have an accurate, up-to-the minute and historical view of production. They had no way of knowing what was really going on in production and could not spot trends, reduce the variation on the line, or reduce the cost of goods.

Real-Time Information Empowers Change

Wadyka partnered with Hertzler Systems to implement real-time weight control on the production line. The implemented system puts tablets in operator's hands. The system guides the users to collect weight and compliance data. This information is collected on the pizza line at several points in the process so that the team can monitor and control each ingredient, and the final product weight.

In six weeks, Giorgio saw reduced waste across the entire line, providing significant savings. The low cost items, such as pizza dough and tomato sauce, saw a 70% reduction in waste and overfill. The high costs items, such as meats and cheeses, saw over an 80% reduction. "We could not be any happier with the results. GainSeeker has given us the visibility we need to reduce waste and product giveaway", said Wadyka.

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Wadyka and his team no longer wait for days for weight data. Now they can interact with information instantly on a dashboard, and have a complete view of the process. Giorgio employees are empowered to act immediately to reduce overpack and waste.

Cultural Transformation Impacts Business Results

Giorgio Foods has driven significant performance improvements by empowering employees with real-time information that impacts business decisions. Managers and supervisors at all levels of the organization can take informed action faster than they ever have before. This shift contributes to a culture of empowerment that embraces change. Giorgio is now moving faster and more nimbly than ever before to capitalize on growth opportunities.

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