ABSTRACT

Improving Efficiencies for the Loading and Packaging Departments at San Luis Sourdough

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San Luis Sourdough, currently has issues with efficiency and standardization in their packaging department, ergonomics problems in the packaging department, shipment accuracy in their loading department, and lacks an organized layout design. As a result, four objectives were designed within a six month period. The first was to create standard operating procedures for the packaging department. To inform this decision time studies were performed before and after creating these SOPs. It was discovered that there was a clear need for the SOPs due to variation in packaging efficiency among new and experienced associates. The second set of time studies showed the SOPs were more effective than their current training program. The second was to reduce the ergonomic issues observed in the packaging department. During a visit to the facility, the number of times that an associate had to bend to reach a pallet, reach above for a pallet or utilize a ladder to reach a pallet was recorded. It was found that there were in fact ergonomic problems placing strains on the associates bodies and health. An optimal height was determined from observations, but the solution wasn’t possible to implement due to it stemming from outside of San Luis Sourdough. The third was an implementation plan for a barcode scanning system within their loading zone. Data was collected on the number of loaves that they short their distributors and the money lost as a result. This data and a cost analysis did not support the decision to implement a barcode system that would in turn decrease the number of inaccurate shipments. However in order to save valuable time and stay up to date with technology in the manufacturing industry, it would be beneficial to consider implementing in the near future. The fourth was a new layout that designated a place for placing empty and full pallets, which are what hold the loaves of bread. The current layout was updated and redesigned into two new layouts. The Production Supervisor chose the superior layout based on its easy access for the packaging associates. He in turn said that it would be easy to implement if they decided to do so. Three of the four objectives were met and their results were as expected. The recommendations to San Luis Sourdough would be to implement the SOPs by training all associates to follow them, implementing a barcode scanning system in their loading zone, and redesigning the facility to match the improved layout.