

Lab & production services

Success story

Lean process implementation streamlines glassware service

IMPLEMENTING LEAN PROCESSES CREATES A STREAMLINED SERVICE & COST-SAVINGS INITIATIVE

CHALLENGE

A global Fortune 500 pharmaceutical company was experiencing a large number of complaints regarding its glassware. Customers were receiving items with chipped glass, incorrect lids, and leftover residues, all pointing to a significant issue stemming from the central glass-washing facilities. These areas were struggling in the absence of any quality assurance (QA) measures, cost controls, ordering tools, service level agreements (SLAs) for maintenance, and key performance indicators (KPIs) to define and track specific objectives.

The company knew where the problem was, but what could they do to address it efficiently and without adding too much strain on their current operations?

SOLUTION

Avantor Services was brought in and implemented a Process Excellence Team to review the glass-handling processes at the facilities, with the aim to create a robust service that would supply the customer with leading quality standards. By utilizing Six Sigma's DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) and 5S (Sort, Set, Shine, Standardize, Sustain) processes to streamline the service, Avantor was able to introduce:

- pH testing to highlight any incorrect use of detergents
- Kanban visual workflows to reduce lead times and replace damaged glassware stock
- Five quality-assurance checks to create a standard of excellence
- Onsite interviews to capture the voice of the customer and identify key issues
- Ordering package to support KPIs and further increase the level of service

CHALLENGE

A major pharma company was receiving complaints regarding their glassware, experiencing a high number of breakages and low satisfaction of meeting quality standards.

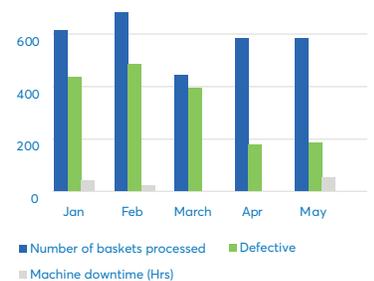
SOLUTION

Avantor Services overhauled the central glass-washing facilities with Six Sigma methodology and implemented Quality Assurance checks and efficiency measures.

RESULTS

The company realized a 36% reduction in machine downtime, 49% drop in breakages, and over 250 hours saved in direct labor per year.

Avantor Services reduced the amount of defective glassware and machine downtime, all while increasing the amount of baskets processed.



RESULT

Streamlining work patterns and implementing the Kanban method has reduced direct labor by 250 hours per year. Cross-functional training in pH testing, consumables, and stock-levels has strengthened a one-team approach that utilizes skill sets from different areas of excellence.

The implementation of Quality Assurance checks has reduced the number of defective glassware returned to the labs and significantly contributed to the reduction of hand injuries in the

workplace. There have been no hand injury incidents to date, and the success of the project has instilled confidence and interest in expanding the service to other areas of the company.

Additionally, the switch to the correct detergent for the process has dramatically reduced the need to reprocess glass and eliminated machine downtime, further resulting in cost savings and an increased capacity.

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