

“Kaizen Blitz” for Freudenberg in Tyneside, UK

Issue for Freudenberg

To meet the constant cost down targets for their automotive customers Freudenberg needed to continually improve efficiencies. One product group, the torsional vibration dampers, was under severe competitive threat and so major changes were necessary

Overall contribution / achievement of objectives

Although Freudenberg performed many continuous improvement (kaizen) events, this was the first time it had organized something of this scale. Steve led the overall project which involved 150 people from all over Europe working in 16 teams over 10 weeks. Their objective was to completely rebuild the entire production area for this product group, which required over 200 machines to be moved. Steve led the planning of the whole event with a core team in support as it was critical to ensure supplies to the customers during this exercise.

Impact on the business / bottom line

The project was a great success and produced annual savings in the region of £1m. This represented a productivity improvement of 30%. There was no real drop in overall output and no quality issues during this relocation.

Leadership / people management skills

“Steve provided the drive and support for the whole project. His natural enthusiasm was infectious to the whole team, who despite working very long hours seemed to have a great deal of fun. The transformation to the business, productivity and profitability was outstanding.”

Kaizen Blitz – s12n