

DAVID COWBURN B Eng, PhD, DMS, TechIOSH

PERSONAL DETAILS:

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PROFILE:

An experienced hands-on Lean and six-sigma specialist in manufacturing, service and administrative processes, with a track record of managing end-to-end business and operational process improvement within a diverse range of domestic and international market sectors and cultures.

Able to work and train at all levels in an organisation from board to shop floor level in a people based hands-on style to implement a Lean culture and bring about rapid measurable step changes in performance to systems and processes.

Identifying and prioritising required changes using methods such as Hoshin Kanri, value stream mapping, 3P, Kaizen, six-sigma, project management and business analysis models. Able to convince and influence people and thus organisations to change, through coaching, training and mentoring at all levels, implementing those changes and leaving them permanent.

Looking for assignments where Lean and/or six-sigma based process improvement, sustainable cultural change or turnaround is necessary to help secure a stronger future.

CAREER HISTORY (reverse chronological order):

Jun 06 – date **LEAN & SIX-SIGMA SPECIALIST - c4c ltd.**

Supporting business leaders to implement and make permanent a Lean culture and business/process improvement.

Achievements:

1. Working as an associate for a global Lean consultancy, prepared materials for and ran workshops in 3P (Production Preparation Process) for a global leader in “green” energy.
2. Developed state of the art Yellow Belt and 8D training materials for a six-sigma consultancy and delivered week long training sessions.
3. Supporting a Global (USA & Germany) CEO lead Lean initiative, improving central accounting functions utilising value stream mapping, 5S and CEDAC tools to improve productivity by 400%.
4. Lead a building products processing company to implement their Lean program from strategy deployment to root-level improvement activities. Senior management (Hoshin team) were guided to set-up systems and procedures for implementing and sustaining a Lean culture. An implementation team was established, tactical and operational teams were selected and 50% of the workforce trained in Lean culture and techniques.
5. Increased grinding output from 560,000 to 800,000 per week in an Aerospace bolt manufacturing company using six-sigma and Lean principles. Undertaking DOEs, capability studies and team based improvement activities to maximise output and explain variations in performance. £190,000 per annum saved and £1.3m cash released.
6. Led Lean workshops and six-sigma projects and trained internal Lean facilitators in waste identification, 5S, one-piece-flow, SMED and Poka Yoke as part of a CEO driven culture change initiative at a major German Aerospace seat manufacturer.
7. Supplier development of a critical lightweight composite components producer. Identifying process variability via six-sigma techniques and control issues and managing interface, improving communication leading to a quick resolution of supply problems and reinstatement of ‘approved supplier’ status within 3 months.

Jun 00 – Jun 06 MANAGING DIRECTOR - BOX telematics ltd, Coleshill (40 staff, £5.7m t/o profitable)

Brought in by an entrepreneurial owner to take a leading edge technology and turn it into a business.

Achievements: Guided development of state of the art products consisting of intelligent GSM mobile communication electronic hardware and internet based interface. Developed in-house manufacturing and supply capability. Set-up Lean administrative processes. Installed Miller Heiman sales system and lead direct and agent based sales teams. Handed over a well structured going concern with a unique market position.

Mar 99 – Jun 00 BUSINESS EXECUTIVE SPECIAL OPERATIONS - Williams PLC, Derby.

Undertaking several international integration and improvement assignments for the corporate board of directors.

Achievements:

1. Acting as interim VP Operations to five plants in the USA (1800 employees), to rescue a failing lock and door furniture manufacturer. The company was unprofitable and losing market share due to supply and quality issues. Plant management was reorganised and, following an extensive Pareto analysis, the product portfolio reduced by 60%. A number of Lean teams were trained and deployed, whose job it was to rapidly implement one-piece flow line processes, quick tool changes (SMED) and flexible batch process cells. Product lead-times reduced from 16 weeks to 6 weeks, customer quality performance was restored and stock turns increased from 1.5 to 5.
2. Consolidated Far Eastern cash-in-transit acquisition (t/o HK\$1.2bn, circa £80m) by reducing IT & administration overhead by 120 personnel, improving profitability from 6% to 16%. Coordinated a challenging multi-site business improvement plan.
3. Integrated newly acquired Swedish fire extinguisher producer and distributor (t/o SEK135m circa £10m) in to Williams' European distribution network and wound up inefficient local manufacturing base, improving profitability from 3% to 12%.
4. Developed a detailed business improvement plan for Spanish paint manufacturer and packaged company for divestment by radically improving housekeeping and process efficiencies through Lean practices.

Jan 95 - Feb 99 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT EXECUTIVE - McKechnie plc

Initially as MD of Linread Automotive and then taking a wider group role as business/process improvement specialist.

Achievements:

1. Turned around Dutch plastic extrusion company by reorganising manufacturing management, installing Lean cellular manufacturing and key performance indices.
2. Set-up 'McKechnie Lean Business School' and trained graduate engineers in full range of Kaizen and Lean manufacturing techniques. Personally undertaking over 30 improvement workshops in a diverse set of businesses in automotive, aerospace, office furniture, DIY plastic extrusion and specialist oil industry production.
3. Linread Automotive (£30m t/o, 355emp, 3 sites [Birmingham, Northampton, Leicester]) was acquired by McKechnie and consisted of four sites requiring restructuring and consolidation. Taking the role of task force chairmen, two Automotive cold forging plants were consolidated into one. Acting as operations manager, the Leicester operation, which supplied machined precision parts to the automotive and aerospace industry, was turned around from a loss making business to breakeven within 3 months and sustainably profitable after 1 year. Basic operational changes were required such as improved housekeeping (5S), cellular working, reducing set-up times (SMED), multi-skilling, improved job planning etc. Implemented QS9000 on all 3 sites and gained Ford Q1 status. In extremely tough market conditions profits rose from 4% to 9%.
4. Used by board to act in a pre and post acquisition operational management role to identify and deliver bottom line benefits in strategic targets.

Dec 93 - Dec 94 OPERATIONS DIRECTOR – Avon S&H, Tonypany, Wales. (£9m t/o, c180emp)

Brought in to set-up and operate a new joint venture company making automotive air conditioning plumbing systems.

Achievements: Recruited and trained 100 employees in six months. Utilising team based process mapping techniques, set-up Lean administrative systems and procedures. Installed Lean 5S and one-piece flow within manufacturing cells with KPIs and a team performance based bonus system. Grew company from £3m to £9m and handed over as a profitable entity to USA shareholder.

Jul 92 - Dec 93 MANAGING DIRECTOR - Schade UK Ltd, Castle Brom, Birm. (£9m t/o, c220emp)

Satellite start-up UK subsidiary of a German parent, producing automotive doorframes, sixth lights, plastic/rubber extruded assemblies.

Achievements: Grew company from £3m to £9m. Developed a sound operational base based on Lean production principles, world-class quality and immaculate house-keeping. Implemented ISO9000 & RG2000 quality systems. Negotiated 'single status' working practices. Improved stock turns from 10 >25. Recruited Operations Director to operate company.

Jan 84 - Jul 92 PROJECT DIRECTOR - GKN Plc Group companies

Responsible for managing new business projects for GKN Group companies.

Achievements:

1. Project Director GKN Sankey - trained by Toyota in Japan on Toyota Production System and set-up floorpan manufacturing line for new £7m Japanese automotive business.
2. Managing Director - GKN Composites Ltd & Director - Translite KK, Tokyo, Japan. New technology spin-off company producing hi-tech composite leaf spring for automotive & industrial markets. Commissioned viable innovative production process. Developed international orders worth £3m. Negotiated and sold company to Japanese partner.
3. Project Manager - GKN Technology Ltd. Developed innovative suspension systems and components in collaboration with Global OEM partners.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Bradford University **B Eng** (Mech. Eng.) Class 2.1 Hon's.

Bradford University **PhD** (Mech. Eng.)

Thesis entitled "Mechanical Performance of Automotive V Belts".

Wolverhampton Polytechnic MBA course **DMS** (Diploma in Management Studies)

British Institute of Management best student award.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS:

- ❖ **Lean** - Toyota Production System (TPS), Hoshin Kanri, 3P (Production Preparation Process), Just in Time (JIT), value stream mapping (VSM), Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), error proofing (Poka Yoke), rapid tool change and equipment effectiveness (SMED, OEE) and workplace organisation (5S).
- ❖ **Six-Sigma certified black belt** - DMAIC data driven problem solving and statistical analysis methodology.
- ❖ **Strategic Analysis** - competitive positioning, product portfolio analysis, business continuity management to BS25999-2.
- ❖ **Communication** - Excellent presentation skills at all levels, conversational German.

PERSONAL: Married with two children and enjoys family life, biking, football and fishing.