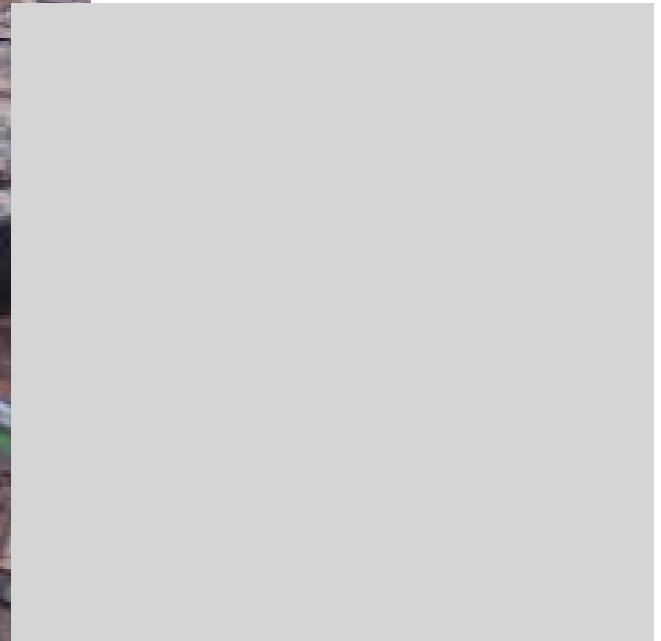




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Nhlangano Heads of Departments Reach a Milestone



Introduction

It has been a just more than a year (15 months in May to be exact) since the first session with the Nhlanguano Heads of Departments (HODs). The first session was aimed at equipping the then HODs: Steven Bhekilanga Dlamini, Phineas Komie "PK" Dlamini, Xolani Randy Hlophe, Dave Charles "Mzaca" Horsley, Reginald Mzwandile Khumalo, Philip "Lilly" Lapidos, Joel Ndlangamandla, Benedict Mangaliso Nxumalo, David George Rossouw and Sipho Simelane with skills to conduct project and presentation reviews. The HOD's Leadership Development Programme focused on the following modules:

- The Montigny Way
- Project Management and Kaizen
- Effective Communication
- Managing Team Performance
- Decision Making and
- Effective Team Leadership

During the programme two members of the Heads of Department retired, these were Steven Dlamini and Sipho Simelane.

Mr. Coenraad Kruger the General Manager of Montigny Nhlanguano at the inception meeting with Mohale Emmanuel Consulting Services represented by George Mamaila indicated that he sees a 3-year journey to turn Nhlanguano around and improve. Mr Kruger highlighted that much as the Foreman had started before the HODs, it is critical for the HODs to be taken through the development to create alignment and to be capacitated with the skills and knowledge to take Nhlanguano to the next level. One of the pain points highlighted at the time was a gap in communication.

There has been collaboration with the Foreman by the HODs to implement identified projects for the betterment of Montigny South Region. The focus for the HODs in terms of projects was dual:- firstly it was Nhlanguano as a whole and then their own Departments. This has resulted in HODs auditing each other on areas such as Housekeeping to improve on safety.

During the programme, the HODs crafted a vision for Montigny Nhlanguano.

The vision is:

- To maximize production in a safe environment by providing flexible and profitable services through
 - improving skills and empowering our people
 - securing markets by producing new quality products
- and creating wealth for all.



On graduation day, the HODs presented on projects implemented in their departments as follows:

Chipboard projects improvements presented by Dawie Rossouw

Team Vision

To produce a good quality board, that will satisfy our customer demands.

Team Values

- Responsibility
- Achievement
- Creativity
- Wisdom
- Productivity



Before improvements on material spillage



After material spillage improvements at forming station

Chipboard's project goal was to eliminate waste. They achieved this through implementing improvements that ensured a reduction of glue usage and material spillage.

Glue consumption reduced from 98.74kg/m³ to 94.40kg/m³

- This was achieved through reducing dust content in material.
- Reducing operating temp of glue blenders.

Reduced spillages that lead to more material available for production

- This was achieved through replacing type of conveyors.
- Installation of belt scrappers.



EDI project improvements presented by Xolani Hlophe

EDI Department is a service center that supports both internal and external stakeholders on Customs & Border Management Compliance through the Company Policies & Customs Act.

Team Vision

Is providing total solutions that encompass high quality innovative services. To make EDI flawless, professional with zero tolerance on errors by enforcing the "zero-tolerance-mistakes policy" and mostly aligning the company within the global environmental standard.



EDI stands for Electronic Data Interchange. This is a system that allows companies to exchange information electronically with different stakeholders i.e., Eswatini Revenue Services, South African Revenue Services & both Departments of Agriculture, respectively. This system mainly assists on swift facilitation of trade and customs compliance on all exports and imports transaction.

Before programme

Most of the Officers felt lost, the team was divided. There was a lot of credit notes processed caused by errors made by the Officers which led to a lot of conflicts, politics and a lot of penalties for Montigny.

What was implemented

A team building initiative was done by the team, this involved a financial contribution which the team used for a braai. Systems and proper working procedures were put in place. The team was sent for training. In addition, there were system upgrades. During the braai and back at the Office the team brainstormed and shared ideas, addressed work related and personal matters.



Results

The team implemented zero tolerance on processing errors which achieved 99,9% on Customs and Border Management Compliance. There is now more team unity. The team has more time to read the Customs Act and whenever they have questions they call either SRA (now ERS) or SARS for answers. There is more online training and this will to continue in order to sharpen the skills. There is improved discipline and conducive working environment. Everyone is important and everyone matters. Montigny achieved a Preferred Trader Status and is the second Swazi owned company to achieve this status. This means that Montigny goods do not experience unnecessary delays at the border, so we are able to import parts and material quicker and reach our customers with our products much quicker.



Stores projects presented by Komie PK Dlamini

PK started the presentation by saying "I would like to take this opportunity to say - words cannot explain what George and his company has done for me, as an individual and for Stores as a team. Before you came, I was so reserved and yet aggressive in my approach, but today I know that I must always be a team player, be accommodative, be flexible and have faith and trust in myself and my team. Now I can take as much as I give".

Team Vision

To create easy processes for Stores and all different departments to meet targets.

Team Values

- Communication
- Flexibility
- Responsibility
- Integrity

We have turned the Stores around into being a wonderful place to work in and a place where human beings can settle. Stores is divided into 5 sections, namely: Receiving Bay, Main Stores, Dispatch Area, Fuel Section and Offices for Stores Buyer, Reception and Manager. In the past it was a free for all to buy from suppliers. One of our positives at Stores is that we have managed to push for all procurement in Nhlangoane to be done through stores. This has made it easier for us to control the flow of documents and cost. Everything that needs to be ordered goes via Stores. Stores handles things such as: quotations, orders, deliveries for both stock items and direct purchases.

Stock take was a nightmare as it used to take three (3) to four (4) days. Since we introduced a layout system with item bin location, stock take is now a less than one-day affair. It is now easier for the Storemen to locate items on the shelves saving on overtime costs.

"The training that I have received has taught me that we must always keep on improving"
Komie concluded.



Sawmill projects presented by Phillip Lavidos

Team Vision

To increase our level of communication, interaction, and efficiency.

Team Values

- Commitment
- Integrity
- Self-Respect
- Co-operation
- Communication



The Sawmill team has the following as project core goals, injury free department (safety), zero claim when it comes to quality and continuous improvement on production. Samwill implement the following for improvements: monthly meeting for smoother communication, check lists for machinery, Mini shutdowns for preventative maintenance, safety audits, team birthday celebrations, housekeeping audits, log sorting according to sizes and plank quality checklists.

Future plans

- To sell 95% of all production as dried material.
- To increase production through adding additional lines.
- Replace outdated machines with new and improved technology.

Results

By increasing our air drying yard it has allowed us to load more "dried" stacks per load therefore cutting transport costs by 50%. Through our improvements we had managed to increase our A-grade percentage from 70% to 75% leading to a 3,5% increase in average selling price. Through improving our recovery rate to 51%, it has added 5% to our bottom line.



Quality log stacking improvement before and after



Electricity project presentation by Benedict Nxumalo

Team Vision

To be the best service provider, with high quality at minimal cost.

The journey has just begun, and there is a long way forward. All it takes is teamwork and a vision. and that is us. These are the future plans for upgrades and plant integration.

1. PLC upgrades are needed
2. Cables need to be upgraded
3. Panels need to be revamped
4. Training needs to be researched



Projects

Main Isolators were installed after the last electrical fire we had at Chipboard. This was necessary after noting that the protection we were relying on with Eswatini Electricity Corporation was not enough. The costs incurred on repairs after that fire were astronomical in terms of downtime, labour and equipment replacement. One of the projects implemented at Chipboard related to the glue pot. Operators did not have clear view of how much glue was in the pot and had to use a dipstick. Displays were put in place which measure the volume and weight in kilograms. It is now easy for the Operator to know how much each pot contains, rather than for the Operator to go up to the pots and use a dipstick for level checking and then input that to a formula to know how much volume is inside.



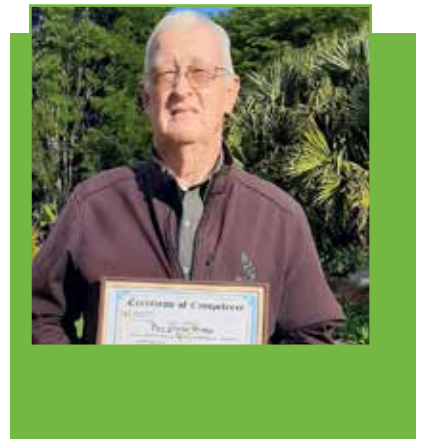
Garage Service Department projects presented by Dave Horsley

Team Vision

To be able to work independently and with minimum supervision on form.

Team Values

- Empowerment - To empower the team with knowledge to fully service the plant.
- Accountability - the maintenance team is accountable for all the machinery's reliability in the plant.
- Commitment - To have a commitment to the company and have the plant readily available to the production team to execute their duties.
- Knowledge - To impart knowledge to the engineering team to efficiently service the plant machines.



Previous State

- Safety very poor
- Hours capturing
- Condition of working space
- Welding bay fabrication
- No office
- Daily fuel usage
- Overtime on weekends



Current State

- Safety talks done daily
- New job card hours captured daily
- Lockers built
- Welding bay extended and covered
- Office was built
- Fuel usage recorded daily
- No overtime done on weekends



Improvements at Garage Service Department

- Security cameras have been installed at the garage.
- Daily fuel used on plant is recorded so that any excess fuel usage on plant can be adjusted in time.
- Overtime has been reduced on weekends (shift roster installed).
- Operation training on plant has been done and ongoing.
- Charge out system for consumables has been changed to charge out to customers direct instead of garage.
- Monitoring of oil usage and oil spills at the garage.
- Recycling of old oil.



Montigny Poles projects presented by Joel Ndlangamandla

Poles was the first area the MECS team of George and TK started at when they did the walk about as part of understanding the landscape (environment). A lot of work was carried out by the Poles Team to improve on housekeeping. Their current challenge is unavailability of raw material. The picture below was taken right at the beginning before any development started at Montginy Nhlngano. As can be seen, housekeeping was not up to standard, quality was an issue, safety was a concern and waste disposal measures were not being followed.



With all the hard work to improve on a number of areas including housekeeping, Poles now looks different.

The vision the team put in place covered the following:

To increase volumes and improve on quality and customer service. The efforts to implement the vision included getting everyone to adopt change and be focused, driving increased accountability and improved communication and feedback.

The team agreed on the following as their values:- success and making a difference, commitment, empowerment, positive thinking, honesty and being reliable. These have driven the improvements and yielded the following results for Poles given actions taken to improve the then status:

- Housekeeping talks every morning and bins placed around the plant to keep the area clean and safe
- Stacking of poles which improved safety and this is no longer above head level due to increased space
- Bundling has also decreased losses as Poles used to suffer due to loss of material
- Re-routing of electrical wires which improved safety
- Safer disposal of sludge
- Ventilated petrol storage
- Road has been leveled
- Chain saw operators have been trained as well as grader which improve production

Poles implemented some of the following, introduced picking slips, double checking before loading, bundling and final inspection. Pole also ensured improved planning and treatment of poles and added some of the following measures; no mixing of species even at sampling before treatment of poles which gives the poles an increased lifespan of 20 to 30 years.



Finger Joining and Palleting Plant project presented by Reggie Khumalo

Before Reggie joined FJ and Palleting Plant, he worked at Chipboard. This section of the plant was run by Steven Dlamini who retired and handed over the reigns to Reggie who at the time of publishing was about 12 months as head of this section.

Team Vision

To create a conducive working environment to sensitize the workforce to be more productive.

Team Values

- Self-expression
- Self-awareness
- Safety first
- Result orientated
- Teamwork



Before the leadership development training program, the state was as follows at Finger Joining;

- No ample space for the raw material storage.
- Kilns doors were not up to standard.
- Old molders were utilized.
- One forklift was utilized.
- The plant was open in the front.
- No side door.
- Shavings sales were not moving as per the capacity.
- Utilizing of central compressors.

Improvements

There are three new shelters that can store 500m³ of raw materials. New offices and workshop have been built. Installation of new kilns doors to improve the efficiency of the turnaround time. Industrial curtaining has been installed to prevent wind and rain from entering the plant and further create a warm and non-hazardous environment. New molders were installed which resulted in efficiency time improvement by 20%. The shavings are now sold to reliable customers daily improving the inventory turnover avoiding repackaging due to non-movement of stock. The shavings bay is ear marked for improvement in the future. There are now two forklifts operational and operational downtime has declined. A compressor has been installed to feed the plant directly improving downtime regarding air supply.



Downtime used to be 30 minutes to an hour of no sufficient supply of air. This improvement has resulted in 7% improvement on up time which means improved production. Average production has increased by 19% from 55m³. It now stands at 60m³ – 65m³. The palleting plant production average stands at 40m³ – 45m³.

Future plans

Future plans include a high bund wall that will be built to store plank off-cuts. The shavings bay will be extended and will be under the roof to create a safe and healthy environment for the workers. There is also an idea of having a second line for the finger joint to increase production and ensure more flexibility for customer requirements.



Awards

There were awards given for the following:

Most Improved Person – Joel Ndlangamandla

Team Support – Steven Dlamini

Excellence Award – Phillip Lapidos

Best Team Player (as voted by HODs) – Phillip Lapidos and Reggie Khumalo



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