



The Stelter Company – Eliminating Redundant Steps for a Streamlined and More Accurate Process

Background:

The Stelter Company assists charitable organizations accomplish their missions by writing, designing, producing and distributing high-quality direct mail newsletters, collateral material and internet-based products. In addition, Stelter has the industry's largest staff of field consultants in the United States. These consultants help organizations determine their marketing needs and recommend appropriate solutions and strategies.

Challenge:

The Stelter Company was interested in streamlining processes in order to shorten customer lead time and to reduce errors and duplicative efforts among different departments. Stelter leadership expressed particular frustration with their challenging task of managing the print production process effectively. Some of the difficult issues with project tracking and management arose from customer changes late in the process; lack of complete information up front; and misaligned communication between departments about what and when changes to print pieces were being made. Many departments, furthermore, complained of having repetitive processes involving a lot of backtracking, rework and redundant edits.

Solution:

DBR workplacelean consultants provided lean training to Stelter Company employees and together they produced a scope of work to address key issue areas. The primary project identified was to eliminate errors and redundancy within the organization's process from start to finish. The team created an ideal future state and implementation plan to accomplish their primary goals of reducing errors, eliminating redundant steps and lowering the number of reruns.

Results:

The Stelter Company employees enthusiastically embraced lean process improvement. Together, the staff created and implemented solutions that achieved the desired results.

- Errors, returns and customer complaints have been significantly reduced
- 20% of the steps in the overall printing production process were eliminated
- Reduced customer lead time from 6 weeks to 4 weeks
- Reduced the number of different people communicating with the customer from 6 to 2

Thanks to the lean training, the Stelter Company continues to find ways to streamline processes within their organization, continually achieving greater efficiency and providing better services for their customers.

“Our workplacelean facilitators showed us that by utilizing the subject matter experts within our company, we could gain a better understanding about what needed to change to accomplish the results we wanted. The facilitators brought a fresh perspective and saw things that we ourselves were not able to identify. The impact on our company's culture and its performance has been game-changing.”

– **Steve Tuil, Editorial Quality Administrator, The Stelter Company**