

Spiers Engineering Granted Funding for WAM (5S)

In January 2011, CTPM became an **Approved Provider** under the **2011-2012 NSW Strategic Skills Program** for Existing Workers. One of the first sites to take advantage of this funding to train and develop their employees with CTPM was Spiers Engineering located near Wollongong. Funding of **\$1,125** per student was provided to assist their employees to achieve a single Unit of Competency in Competitive Manufacturing Cert III which is a nationally recognised qualification.

This is a great example where NSW sites are able to improve productivity and reduce cost with the aid of **NSW government funding!**

CTPM has developed a range of short programs linked to Competitive Manufacturing units which are being sponsored by the NSW Department of Education & Training – State Training Services. One such program is the 12 week Work Area Management (5S) program which was taken on board by Spiers Engineering.

Established in Wollongong in 1948 by Charles (Charlie) Spiers, **Spiers Engineering** has grown to become an integral part of the Wollongong engineering community. Upon his retirement in 1987, Charlie passed control of the business to his son Bob Spiers, who continued in his father's footsteps providing quality engineering workmanship.

The Spiers Engineering group is now one of the region's leading engineering workshops and is positioned at the leading edge of manufacturing technology and business-to-business service delivery. The site is a full service CNC machine shop specialising in repairs, modification, quantity production, prototypes and R&D projects. Servicing a wide spectrum of Industries from small local manufacturers to large Fortune 500 Companies and Defence Industries, each job and customer is treated with individual dedication.

However, like every leading company there is always a need to continually improve and update

processes to keep on top of the game. An increase in work demand resulted in a rapid growth of employees over a 4 month period, which brought about a lack of organisation in the workplace and office.

Figure 1 – Before photos of Workplace



Realising the necessity to approach this issue quickly (tyranny of time) CTPM was invited to the site to review their needs. Through much discussion and a site tour, a clear aim was eminent. Spiers Engineering was looking to **improve productivity, quality and safety of the workplace** by removing clutter, improving layout and flow of materials. At the same time creating a workplace that is more inviting to work in and one that will impress customers and enhance business opportunities.

Figure 2 – Before photos of Workplace



The proposed solution was to place all employees on site into three teams – 1 office team and 2 workshop teams. CTPM would focus on industrial housekeeping training, based on principles of 5S and in conjunction get each employee to complete a single Unit of Competency, which encourages skills to develop and sustain through assessment. Having the funding at their disposal, CTPM was also able to aid Spiers Engineering in training costs.

On the 7 April 2011 with government funding approved and CTPM's **Work Area Management (5S) 12 week program**, all 10 employees underwent a half-day kick-off workshop preparing them for the activities and process that was to take place. Each participant received a detailed workbook to guide them through each part of Work Area Management and an Assessment Log containing questions, requirements and prompts for evidence collection to complete the unit.

Throughout the 12 weeks the following began to unfold:

- Employees worked together as an Area Based Team to clear up, sort out and **'establish a place for everything and everything in its place'** so as to reduce frustrations, create a safer workplace and make it easier to achieve the Production Plan;
- Communication between employees increased; and
- Standard practices were beginning to be set across the entire workplace to make sure agreed improvements were 'locked in' by all employees.

Figure 3 – After photos of Workplace



To strengthen the process and to enhance team work throughout the site, at week 6 of the program (mid-point presentation of proposed improvements to Site Leadership) the two workshop teams formed to create one which further broke down the barriers and increased the communication across the site.

At the completion of this 12 week program, each employee was deemed competent in their unit assessment, the site had been cleared-up and sorted, improvements had been made and most importantly a priority list of future tasks and improvements was created for continuation of the Work Area Management process. The employees moral and team work were evidently enhanced. If you asked them, what they thought about the training program they would reply:

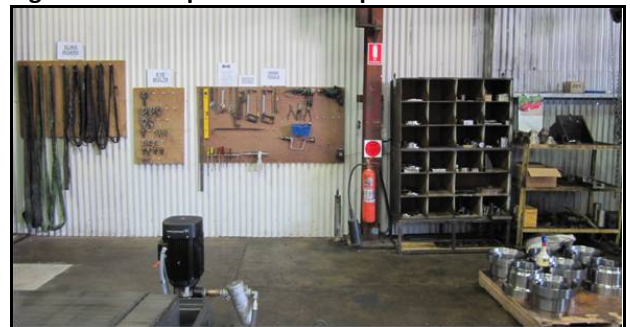
"Really great process and everyone jumped onboard which was pleasing. It has made everyone responsible... making things more accessible which is really noticed during our busy times"

Figure 4 – After photos of Workplace



The most pleasing aspect of the process is to witness the sustained improvements and further enhancement put into place in our visit to the site 3 months later. The concept of Work Area Management has certainly been continually applied, with future improvements on the horizon.

Figure 5 – After photos of Workplace 3 months on!



On behalf of CTPM we would like to congratulate the entire team at Spiers Engineering for their commitment and success in the program.

For further information please contact:



Samantha Rowan

CTPM Navigator

Phone: 02 4226 6184

Email: samantha.rowan@ctpm.org.au

Website: www.ctpm.org.au