



"Sugar Australia – Yarraville, share Frontline Problem Solving Learnings!"

On Thursday 15 March 2012, a CTPM Victoria Learning Group Network Meeting (LGNM) was held at **Sugar Australia's Yarraville** site. The meeting theme was **"Practical Frontline Problem Solving"** and was attended by delegates representing OneSteel – Australian Tube Mills, Boral, Buildex and Sugar Australia.

The LGNM agenda included a site tour and a presentation by Shailendra Narayan (Systems Manager) on the sites achievements and learnings of applying CTPM's 7-Step Problem Solving Process supported by the use of the Frontline Problem Solving A3 Summary Sheet as seen Figure 1 below. The meeting finished with a discussion session where delegates shared their own experiences and learnings in implementing Frontline Problem Solving techniques and Root Cause Analysis (RCA).

Some of the key learning's that were discussed in the session were focused on three key areas of the 7-Step Problem Solving Process:

Problem Definition

- Is the most difficult and challenging step for people to get right;
- You need to keep refining the Problem Definition until you get down to **object & deviation format**;
- You must ensure your Problem Definition is focusing on **one specific** problem and not multiple problems; and
- When you have a poor Problem Definition it will become very difficult to identify the Root Cause (broad problem = many possible root causes).

Problem Analysis

- It is important to use **facts and data** to validate possible causes;
- You need to seek technical expertise both internally and externally; and
- The use of a Process Flow Map for more complex problems will help to visualise and communicate the problem better.

Figure 1 – Frontline Problem Solving A3 Summary Sheet

Improvement Theme:		Title:		Date Initiated:		Date Completed:		Site:	
Department:	Equipment / Process:	Prepared By:		Latest Update Date:	Latest Version:				
1. Define Problem (Plan)				4. Develop Root Cause Solutions – Summary Result of Root Cause Analysis (Plan)					
Problem Statement				Cause 1:					
Problem Description				Possible Solutions:					
Problem Definition				Cause 2:					
What				Possible Solutions:					
Where				Possible Solutions:					
When				Possible Solutions:					
Size				Possible Solutions:					
Point of Occurrence				Possible Solutions:					
Is there any history of this problem?				5. Implement Solutions – Summary of action completed (Do)					
2. Contain Problem – Detail the containment action required and completed (Plan)				Proposed Actions / Approved Actions					
Detail the containment action that has been taken:				Who					
Date Implemented:				Proposed Date					
Place Implemented:				Completed Date					
Implemented by:									
Verification of action by:									
3. Analyse Problem – Summary of the Cause & Effect diagram (Plan)				6. Evaluate Results – Evaluate the results of the improvements made (Check)					
Materials									
Methods									
People									
Machine									
7. List Future Actions (Act)									
Approved Solutions:				Approved A3 Summary Sheet:					
Leader Signature:				Leader Signature:					

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Communication and Understanding

- The use of a Frontline Problem Solving A3 Summary Sheet is an effective way to communicate and present problem analysis to both technical and non-technical people in the business;
- It is important to use the Daily Production Review Meetings to trigger problem solving and monitor progress of their solutions;
- People need to apply the problem solving process to real problems a number of times (at least 3) in quick succession to develop good problem solving skills;
- The importance of including follow-up coaching after the initial training workshop; and
- Understanding that Problem Solving is a learning process and a key part of it is about gaining greater knowledge and understanding of your complex processes / system.

Figure 2 – Shailendra Narayan and Larry Mazza



On behalf of CTPM, its members and guests, we would like to thank Sugar Australia Yarraville for hosting the Learning Group Network Meeting and a special thank you goes to Shailendra Narayan and Peter Whitmore for organising the site tour, morning tea, and presentation.

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