



CCTC Newsletter

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Introduction

2017 was an exciting year in which the Cluster rolled out a vastly expanded industry support programme. This included 12 workshops, 3 local study tours, 362 consulting days of expert Lean support to participants in the IDC-funded Competitiveness Improvement Programme and other valuable initiatives which will be detailed in the 2017 annual report. This newsletter discusses some of the highlights from events held in the last quarter of the year.

Recent CCTC Events

1. Best Practice Study Tours

Factory tours provide manufacturers with a unique opportunity to learn from other production environments and offer insight into improvement opportunities within their own factories. The Cape Town Study Tour was the third and final study tour this year.

Best Practice Study Tour: Cape Town

Implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) systems is a challenging process and is key to driving product quality improvements. To provide insight into the varied TQM approaches that can be used by CTFL firms, the CCTC took its member firms to ACA Threads.

Held on the 17th of October, ACA Operations Manager, Chris Handt, gave delegates insight on how a unique approach to total quality management has been

employed at ACA, called Statistical Process Control (SPC). Sharing the same principles as Jidoka, SPC applies real-time statistical analysis to data in order to immediately identify and flag any variations in output from the required standard. This enables the detection of quality issues at the source.



Unlike other quality management approaches, SPC focuses specifically on measurement, data collection and statistical analysis; capabilities that are still developing within the local CTFL industry. By walking through the production facility, participants were provided with practical insights into how this approach is applied. This included exposure to Andon flagging systems, which notify management of any quality concerns.

2. WCM and Innovation Workshop Series

A series of WCM and innovation workshops was developed for delivery to CCTC member firms over the year. The content for each workshop was derived from research into international best practice, local firm-level benchmarking, and gaps in knowledge and awareness as expressed by industry. During the last quarter of 2017, 6 successful workshops focusing on TQM and JIT, Understanding Fabric, Fabric Sourcing, Absenteeism and Data Management took place.

WCM Training: TQM and JIT

Due to popular demand, a second set of JIT (Just in Time) and TQM (Total Quality Management) workshops were delivered on the 4th and 5th of October.

Similar to the last round of WCM workshops, held in October, Day 1 of the workshops covered JIT inventory management and Kanban inventory scheduling systems. Delivered by Lean expert, Nils Wikström, the workshop focused on the cost of inventory holding, different production system layouts and process flow controls and shop floor implementation of Kanban. From this workshop, delegates were supplied with key insights into the practical applications of pull systems for JIT implementation.

Day 2 of the workshop, delivered by Tamasime Sukati and Kelley Rowe (B&M Analysts), focused on TQM. It covered topics ranging from the economic factors and retail trends affecting manufacturers in the CTFL industry, to the cost of quality, Visual Performance Management (VPM) and Lean concepts including Jidoka.

This workshop included interactive production simulation exercises where delegates designed their own production lines building paper planes, and re-engineering these lines as they learnt new lean principles during the workshop. This provided delegates with insights into the benefits of implementing the lean principles covered in the workshop, such as higher throughput rates and lower reworks rates.

Preproduction Training: Understanding Fabric

Preproduction functions are an integral part of keeping quality levels as high as possible. Individuals involved in the preproduction stage, such as cutting room personnel, are often not equipped with the skills required to identify fabric challenges. This results in the late detection of quality issues, which comes at a high cost to the manufacturer.

To help CTFL manufacturers improve their fabric management decisions, the CCTC hosted a two-day, intensive, preproduction training workshop on the 24th and 25th of October. Delivered by Penny Olivier, a fabric expert with over 40 years of fabric training experience, the workshop provided delegates with training on the composition of the various fabric types and the finishing techniques applied to them.



Day 1 of the workshop covered how fibres are processed into yarns. Understanding this process is significant for manufacturers as the inherent characteristics of fibres have the single largest effect on the nature of the finished fabric. Lessons learnt in this session will help inform preproduction personnel on how they should adjust the way they handle fabric, based on the type of fabric they are using.



Day 2 of the workshop covered how the various fabric types are constructed as well as the various finishing techniques that can be applied to them, which influences how they react when they are sewn and undergo printing.

Collectively, these sessions provided delegates with an improved understanding of the raw materials they work with, facilitating improved control over the quality of their products. The sessions should equip delegates with the practical tools necessary in order to test and determine the different fabric types using burn tests. This skill is particularly useful as a means of checking whether or not fabric meets the requested specifications.

Fabric Sourcing Workshop with Dave Mason

On average, raw materials make up approximately 30% of South African clothing firms' cost of sales and up to 80% for home textiles producers' cost of sales. As the domestic textile industry has contracted, developing effective methods to adequately source quality fabric has become a strategic imperative.

Dave Mason is an expert in the textile industry and in this full day workshop, he provided practical insights into the key focus areas when developing a comprehensive fabric sourcing strategy.



When selecting a new supplier, or evaluating an existing supplier, analysing their overall product and service offering is critical to ensure your requirements are met in full. By using a Fish Bone Diagram, Dave engaged participants on the key considerations when selecting a supplier. These included whether the supplier has the technical skills required, whether the materials they use in production are appropriate as well as whether the equipment and production processes that they employ are suitable.

Once firms have identified suitable suppliers, establishing regular, structured communication is paramount. If the customers' technical requirements are not stated clearly, or stated in a manner that leaves room for misinterpretation, problems will inevitably occur. This is often compounded by a considerable language gap. Dave engaged participants on the key information to specify when placing an order, such as thread count and key interventions to list in the lead time calendar.

Improving communication is likely to improve the level of service from suppliers but quality issues can still arise. Identifying these problems early in the process, before production has begun, will help keep rework and return rates low. Dave outlined the types of testing available to firms and the interventions that can help detect faults early on in the production process. This should enable attendees to implement effective policies to reduce the cost of poor quality fabric.

This workshop provided a comprehensive breakdown of the key considerations for manufacturers when sourcing fabric, allowing firms to reevaluate their strategies going forward.

Absenteeism Workshop

Estimates from Statistics South Africa show that absenteeism costs the SA economy around R16 billion per annum. CTFL firms based in the Western Cape have traditionally incurred high absenteeism rates, which undermine efforts to drive a culture of continuous improvement, boost productivity and overall firm level competitiveness. Dealing with absenteeism is not just about controlling costs in the organisation. There are both direct and indirect costs associated with the effects of absenteeism.

To provide key insights for CCTC member firms, K-Way Manufacturing General Manager, Bobby Fairlamb and his management team hosted an extremely well attended session on the strategies and policies that they have implemented to reduce absenteeism. Placing a primary focus on the people in their organisation has been key to successfully reducing absenteeism.

The full presentation from this workshop, as well as K-Way's "Return to Work Interview" form, is available on the B&M Analysts Information Portal.

Data Management Workshop

As the CTFL industry becomes increasingly competitive, being able to make insightful management decisions as soon as a challenge or opportunity presents itself is imperative. In order to enable this proactive management style, improved visibility within production processes is required, which is best achieved through regular reporting of key performance measures to management. Many CTFL firms don't measure key aspects of their performance meaning that developing this capacity remains a key challenge in the industry.

As a means of addressing this challenge, the CCTC hosted an interactive, full day Data Management workshop. Participating firms were introduced to essential management practices, such as Value Stream Mapping (VSM), whereby the entire production process is mapped out. This process incorporates key performance measures, including, but not limited to throughput time, lead time, and changeovers. The VSM process improves visibility in the production process and systematically assists firms in identifying waste more effectively.

Using this skill, attendees mapped out their firm's "Current State" map, which illustrates how the firm's production facility is currently operating. This provides a foundation for firms to start developing a "Future State" map, which presents the ideal state for a business, whereby waste is minimized, flows in production improve and overall improvements in production capacity can be observed.

By providing management personnel with the tools needed to drive positive change in their businesses, this workshop directly aligns with the CCTC's mandate of facilitating growth within the CTFL industry. Improving visibility in production through effective data management techniques will continue to be an important focus area for the Cluster in 2018.

3. Quick Response Panel Discussion

Implementing Quick Response within the domestic CTFL supply chain is a key intervention for South African retailers and manufacturers in order for them to compete against imported products.



In an effort to reassure and encourage local manufacturers to implement this model, the CCTC hosted a discussion session with Turkish Quick Response specialist Arzu Ensari. Arzu has comprehensive experience in implementing QR, having coordinated and managed the delivery of 3 million garments per week within a QR framework to leading UK retailer, George. Arzu was able to provide useful insights into a potential path for the South African clothing industry, having been part of a similar transition within the Turkish fashion industry. Turkey transitioned from producing commodity products, competing directly against more cost-competitive countries, to producing highly sophisticated products, with a comprehensive service offering, on short lead times.

The presentation included a panel discussion consisting of Marthie Raphael, CEO of PepClo and CCTC Chairwoman; Ian Stein, a director at TCI Apparel; and Declan Kavanagh, Head of Business: The Fix, from TFG Retail. It was widely agreed that implementing the QR model in the Western Cape would add immense strategic value to ensure that the local CTFL industry is able to compete in the global market. The panellists agreed with Arzu that the foundation of the model is the trust established between the retailer, the design house, and the manufacturing supply base. As the panellists highlighted, the strategic relationships among these key entities will only be achieved once there is a shift in mindsets from both local retailers and manufacturers. Arzu emphasised that implementing Quick Response is an iterative process and mistakes will inevitably be made, but the benefits that can be obtained from implementing it effectively are well worth the challenges endured.

Looking to 2018

The CCTC is in the process of preparing the 2018 budget and activity plan. We will be in touch in the beginning of the year to canvass CCTC member needs, which will inform programmatic content for the year ahead. Have a great festive season and we're looking forward to building on the strong momentum generated over the past year!

WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER?

We welcome membership enquiries from clothing and textile manufacturing companies and clothing retailers with operations in the Western Cape, as well as local non-clothing manufacturing companies that can identify with and are aligned with the objectives of the CCTC.

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