Two Nestle Purina managers saved their company millions of dollars as they moved toward a “black belt” level in the Lean Six Sigma business management strategy process. The Six Sigma Black Belt Academy is facilitated through Francis Tuttle Business & Industry Services (BIS).

Justin Wilkinson is an assistant production manager with Nestle Purina Pet Care Company’s Oklahoma City plant. He and Nestle Purina team leader Mike Sanders recently graduated from the Academy.

“It’s given us a better foundation on how to best present challenges to our supervisors,” said Sanders. “We have a format to provide leadership with a problem, a potential solution, and a way to measure that.”

For example, the team identified an escalating packaging damage-rate issue and used the DMAIC method to solve the issue resulting in a 90 percent improvement, from 2.1 to 0.21 percent. Left unchecked, this issue could have resulted in an estimated loss to the company exceeding $450,000.

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“In the past, we’ve only been able to feel that there is a problem, but didn’t have a good way to quantify the problem and solution. The training gave us a way to define the problem, lay out the solutions, and prove which solution will work,” said Wilkinson.

The project-based course is a combination of classroom instruction and coaching that teaches a quantifiable method of analyzing efficiency, process flow and elimination of waste. Also, participants learn how to swiftly eliminate defects and reduce variation.

Pelco Products Inc. of Edmond has been a proponent of the Six Sigma management system for many years. Recently, tangible results were seen after training in team building, streamlining processes, management training, culture objectives and hiring practices.

For example, Pelco, the largest traffic-signal hardware manufacturer in the world must have on-time delivery, which can mean the difference between communities functioning vs. being paralyzed and chaotic, such as in the aftermath of severe weather.

During a Six Sigma training session taught by Pinnacle Partners Inc. and sponsored by BIS, one participant’s project was to reduce the top three causes of job-flow restriction by 50 percent in four months. He did.

In four months:
- “Stuck” orders were reduced by 88 percent; past-due orders were reduced by 73 percent. Estimated annual savings through labor reduction was almost $100,000.
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Bottlenecks in production of traffic signal hardware can paralyze a community after a disaster. Due to the Six Sigma Black Belt Academy, Pelco saw a reduction in ‘stuck’ orders by 88 percent.

YOU NEED TO KNOW
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YOUR SUCCESSES THROUGH US

Leadership training impacts bank’s bottom line

Imagine a new employee approaches you after only six weeks on the job and wants to leave the company. As a manager, this moment can cost you a few thousand dollars. If the employee chooses to leave, you have lost a signing bonus, a month of training, and will face a costly hiring process.

She or he doesn’t have to leave, though. You can save the costs associated with hiring and training by having the right tools to make their time as an employee a success.

Chris Reed, Retail Manager at Coppermark Bank, had the right tools when this situation happened and he was able to turn his employees’ experiences around, save the bank money invested in the new employee, and make his branch a success.

Reed attended the Leadership Development Academy at Francis Tuttle. Business and Industry Services created the academy for people who are new to leadership or represent companies looking to groom employees into future leaders. The course covers employment law; effective interviewing; generational diversity; and conflict-resolution strategies, among others. It is a six-session course, with each session lasting three hours.

“It takes you and gives you a better understanding and a different perspective on managing vs. production,” said Reed. “Now I’m responsible for our success.”

Reed was a new supervisor during the course and has since been promoted. His current position puts him in charge of 16 people and he counts the training as the foundation for his management style. In addition, he has already sent an employee through a subsequent leadership course.

“Francis Tuttle’s instructors had the necessary experience to make the class effective, but what I liked about them was their attitude and approach to leadership,” said Reed. “They emphasized how to take the minor things and make them important. They were very good at what they did.”

The transition from an employee being a technician, expected to produce daily results, to a manager expected to coach, have vision and proactively lead can be a difficult one. A failure to make this transition can be a costly one to both a person and a company.

“If you are a new manager or recent leader who really wants to set yourself apart and be successful at this quickly, this is the class you need to take,” said Reed.

In addition to being promoted after attending the academy, Reed was named a “Rising Star” within his company and has been accepted into other leadership programs recognizing his skills as a manager.

Contact Molly Scalf, Organizational Development Coordinator, Business & Industry Services, 405.717.4703 or mscalf@francistuttle.edu. See page 1 for class schedule.

YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Reed’s Academy training saved the bank $4,000 in hiring bonuses and the training costs within weeks of his class instruction
- Management increased academy graduate’s supervisory responsibility 82%

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

ROBERT ALDRIDGE
Safety Training
raldridge@francistuttle.edu
405.717.4761

Robert’s workplace safety training provides a very low-cost way to achieve your safety training goals. A thorough needs analysis is conducted to identify any specific training needs. Training can help reduce Worker Compensation costs, develop workplace safety plans, increase productivity, and stay in compliance with federal requirements.
HOT TIP
Safety Training—How can a business stay on top of it?

EDITORS NOTE: “Hot Tip” provides business tips, tools and trends from a Francis Tuttle partner, client or customer. Here, Brent Miller and Kevin Pietzyk of the University of Central Oklahoma’s facilities group address safety training.

What challenges do businesses generally face when it comes to safety training?
Safety training is a requirement, but the time it takes to put together the presentations, deliver the course and administratively account for training currencies for each employee can be difficult. When weighing the costs vs. benefits, a company has to find the best way to deliver the training, year-round, while not costing a large number of man-hours. In addition to the training courses, there is a requirement to account for each employee and ensure they attend sessions on an annual basis.

How have you overcome this challenge?
Instead of hiring a full-time safety trainer, we sought a contracted provider for safety-training needs. In today’s economy, many businesses are trying to do more with fewer people and our department at UCO is no different. We turned to Francis Tuttle’s Business and Industry Services team with our requirements and asked them to provide us with the necessary courses for the number of employees we needed trained and asked them to do it working around our schedules. This freed up our time significantly to handle other issues around campus. Instead of dedicating a single full-time employee to provide the training, we can rely on Francis Tuttle to keep up with current safety trends.

What are the benefits to safety training with a contracted provider?
All of our employees go through safety training at one time or another. Some employees are required to complete four hours and some 16 hours annually. Managing who needs training, what they need and when they need it is a big commitment. Being able to rely on a provider to handle the large project and alleviate time constraints is a great benefit. Another benefit is avoiding a single point for all safety training needs. A contractor can rely on a staff of trainers who are subject-matter experts and can do so at a reasonable rate.

What specifically does Francis Tuttle provide for you?
The staff with Francis Tuttle does the training on-site, which is a real advantage. They perform monthly training for the UCO Facilities Group, such as electricians and painters, then they do two sessions each month that is an “annual safety review” for current employees, such as faculty and staff, and, finally, a “safety orientation” is held for any new employees.

Contact John White
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OUR SUCCESSES THROUGH YOU
Government contracting expertise recognized by national organization

Judy Robbins received the Betty McDonald Outstanding Member Achievement Award at the Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers training conference in Seattle. The award is the highest honor given to one of the more than 600 association members annually and was for her work to modernize and reinvent the national certification program for procurement professionals. Her work demonstrated her knowledge of federal government contracting, and will provide a foundation and guide for training.

Congress created the Procurement Technical Assistance Program to help businesses seeking to compete successfully in federal, state and local government contracting. Funded through cooperative agreements between the U.S. Department of Defense and state and local entities, procurement centers provide a range of expert services at little or no charge.

Innovation Center breaks ground

From left are Francis Tuttle board members Bob Turner, Suzette Northcutt Rhodes, Buddy Sanford, David Gillogly, Oklahoma State Treasurer Ken Miller and Superintendent Tom Friedemann.

The Francis Tuttle Business Innovation Center is being constructed at Interstate 35 and Covell Road in Edmond. It will accommodate customized training for local businesses; personal enrichment and professional development courses for adults; short-term; the Center for Municipal Excellence, which provides training with municipalities across the state; and a business incubator. The two-story 38,000-square-foot facility is expected to open in fall 2013. The Francis Tuttle district comprises nearly 415 square miles, and all businesses and individuals in the district can take advantage of consultation and training services.
Q&A

Reaching out to Spanish-speaking persons

What would you advise corporate leaders about the Spanish-speaking population in Oklahoma?
The Hispanic/Latino population makes up nearly 9 percent of the total Oklahoma populous. The rise in this demographic increases the need to be prepared to provide services to a Spanish-speaking customer and can be a life or death issue for firefighters, police officers and EMT personnel.

In addition, the increased population can present a number of opportunities for business to expand their customer base. Whether you are interested in eliminating disparities in service, increasing customer service or opening new doors to business, the “Command Spanish” coursework from Francis Tuttle can help you accomplish your goals.

Isn’t the training worth the investment?
The alternative to “Command Spanish” training is hiring a full-time bilingual staff member. That is a long-term, costly commitment and only provides one person to cover any Spanish-speaking customer needs. “Command Spanish” is an opportunity to have a tailored, staff-wide approach. For example, the City of Arcadia law-enforcement personnel were trained with necessary language skills to request a driver’s license and communicate traffic violations.

What’s the key to providing such service?
The American culture’s customer-service model is designed around a more straightforward delivery than the Spanish-speaking culture’s expectation. A Spanish-speaking person is used to a more personal relationship that might include a longer greeting and more interaction than what is typically delivered. The comprehensive training provided in the curriculum includes an element of cultural immersion that goes beyond commands and into general business practices for success with the Spanish-speaking culture.

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