

Ashley started with HGCA in the purchasing department, where she was responsible for maintenance of contracts and agreements, compliance efforts and execution of procurement projects such as cost reductions and supplier quality resolution. Ashley was also a member of CI's SAP Implementation Team. Ashley holds a bachelor's degree in Business Management and Marketing from Oklahoma State University (Go Pokes!). As part of her professional development, Ashley has received her ISO 9001:2015 Internal Auditor certification, as well as obtaining her Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP) accreditation.

Ashley, her husband, and two boys spend endless hours playing sports. If not at work, you'll likely see her at a baseball complex or a football stadium. Her hobbies include camping, hunting & fishing, going to concerts, and raising chickens on their 5-acre property in rural Sand Springs, Oklahoma.



### What is your role with HGCA?



I am the Lean Specialist. As such, I'm responsible for sustaining the continuous improvement culture throughout both Continental Industries facilities. This involves making recommendations to improve productivity, quality, profitability, and the efficiency of operations - including training employees on Lean tools, planning and facilitating Kaizen events, monitoring performance vs targets, sustaining changes made during events and execution of continuous improvement projects.



# THE POWER OF LEAN MANUFACTURING

Q&A With: Ashley Roberts Lean Specialist HGCA / Continental Industries



#### How can LEAN Manufacturing help a company?



In its simplest form, lean manufacturing helps to find methods for reducing costs and eliminating waste without sacrificing quality or productivity – all while maintaining a profit.

#### Why do we need LEAN Manufacturing?



Companies, including
Hubbell, use lean manufacturing
principles to give them a
competitive advantage. If
applied appropriately, results
include significant reductions
in costs and reduced
production lead times.



## What are the main benefits to expect to achieve by adopting LEAN?



In addition to cost and lead time reduction, by making small, incremental, quality improvements throughout your processes, overall product quality will improve and, in turn, so will customer satisfaction.





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#### **Does LEAN reduce inventory costs?**



In lean, we talk a lot about eliminating waste. Inventory is one of the eight types of waste we often target. By eliminating excess inventory, we free up cash to use in the business to drive further improvements. Excess inventory can also be used to hide a mirage of other issues like supplier delivery delays, scheduling deficiencies, and even machine breakdowns.

# How has employee involvement helped improve quality?



To cultivate a continuous improvement culture, employee involvement is key. Engaged employees are more likely to suggest areas for improvement and to implement decisions they had a part in making. Furthermore, as subject matter experts, troubleshooting and problem resolution occurs immediately as opposed to waiting on management decision. Involved employees strive to achieve goals, because they feel invested in the company and in the process.



## Which major companies are LEAN companies?



It is almost impossible to think about lean without mentioning the likes of Ford Motor Co (moving assembly line) and Toyota Motor Corp (the "Toyota Way" and TPS). Some other major players include NIKE, Inc. and John Deere of Deere & Company.





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HGCA / Continental Industries

#### Does LEAN Manufacturing promote customer satisfaction?



Value – what is the customer willing to pay for? Qualitative and quantitative techniques can be used to determine true value from the customer's perspective.

Value Stream – keeping the customer's perspective, what are all the steps that add value in the process? Those steps that don't add value are considered waste.

Flow – after removing waste from the value stream, ensure the remaining steps in the process flow without interruption or delays.

Pull – pull-based production systems reduce WIP and inventory while creating a Just-in-time (JIT) operation where parts are produced and delivered at the right time and with the right quantity. Pull systems are driven by customer needs.

Perfection – we pursue perfection by implementing the first four steps, but furthermore by implementing lean and continuous improvement into our culture. Employees then strive for perfection in all operations.

