

INGENICS ACADEMY

Lean Trainings



New: Shopfloor Management

Perfecting processes – power to the people.

Efficiency measures are frequently short-lived. So how can companies achieve sustainable progress in their everyday business operations?

Closing the "implementation gap" is one of the biggest challenges facing companies today, and senior managers alarmed at the situation are discussing possible solutions. At this year's Annual Management Circle Meeting, dedicated to the topic of production systems, there was a seminar covering just that topic. And Ingenics' own Ulmer Dialogues dealt with the subject recently in an interdisciplinary manner. In all these discussions shopfloor management emerged as a particularly viable solution. But what is it exactly, and does it really work – or is it just another theoretical concept? German refrigeration company Güntner recently dared to put shopfloor management to the test in its Fürstenfeldbruck facility ...and achieved major success in the process.

Shopfloor management aims to maximize production efficiency, quality, and productivity in order to achieve long-lasting results. The focus is on hands-on involvement. Management must get out of the office, and into the center of activity: that is, the shop floor. Being in the middle

Increasing Productivity by 20% with Lasting Results:

How Leveraging Shopfloor Management Can Help Activate the "Human Element".

rather on the sidelines of the action usually proves both more effective and more sustainable.

This is exactly why Güntner decided to give shopfloor management a try. The company started gathering ideas for their "new factory" project in 2008, but needed professional guidance to launch the endeavor. That's where Ingenics came in. Our advice?

First, look into the toolbox.

- **Key performance indicators: a brave new world?**
Mention lean, and everyone invariably thinks of key performance indicators (KPI) promising quick success and easy implementation. In reality, lean methods can yield astounding results, but the trick is to identify the right KPIs. Because this was their first time using these tools, Güntner's executives chose to focus on reliability, flexibility, planning, and control, as well as best practices for supervisors and managers. To make sure they had the right approach to streamline these areas, they called on Ingenics to help create a plan of action. Through a series of targeted workshops, Ingenics and Güntner worked together to launch the project, detailing goals, responsibilities, and timing for each job.

- **Orientation made easy.**
Still, KPIs have little impact if they are not effectively communicated and visualized. To create value, companies need to focus on three factors: the goal, the current situation, and the trend. Having the goal in mind helps to generate rapid, tangible progress, which in turn increases staff motivation. Rapidly recognizing setbacks helps to instantly initiate problem-solving processes and mitigate the damage.

- **Seeking the perfect balance.**
Hands-on involvement in value creation means more than the simple, if effective, communication of KPIs. Güntner, for example, now has a three-tiered internal communications structure, including daily shift meetings between staff and supervisors, weekly meetings between supervisors and production managers, and clearly defined interfaces between production managers and executives. These meetings allow the Güntner team to regularly assess and update status, trends, and corporate goals. Sure, defining goals, setting the agenda, and writing minutes creates the right environment for a highly efficient operation – but real value creation happens when production managers, foremen, team leaders and supervisors work together to bring the concept to life.



The next step, of course, is making it happen. That's where Ingenics helped Güntner get to the heart of its project by optimizing its team, maximizing leadership skills and motivating employees to help drive the implementation.

- **SMART performs better.**
To make sure Güntner was able to hit its targets, Ingenics introduced the "SMART" rule: making sure that objectives are **Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Timely**, so you're not trying to hit an unachievable goal. SMART offers helpful milestones on the path to a larger, overarching objective. At Güntner, the larger goal was quite ambitious: to position the

Fürstenfeldbruck facility as a role model for all other companies in the Güntner group. To get there, motivation was of course key; but it also required setting smaller, tangible goals along the way that everyone in the organization could achieve – and were willing to pursue. Here again, the buy-in of the team is essential. While executives pave the way by creating a "SMART" path, it is ultimately up to the employees to help implement it, tapping into a mutual excitement towards achieving a common goal.

- **Leadership can be learned.**
For a long time in the business world, all managers needed to demonstrate was

professional competence. But today, managers who expect top performance from their employees must bring much more to the table. They must also be clear decision makers, great motivators, conflict resolution specialists, and astute planners. Since it's rare to be born with every one of these qualities, Ingenics has developed an analysis to better identify a leader's strengths and weaknesses, paired with a series of targeted, customized coaching sessions to address vulnerabilities. This assessment was put to use at Güntner, and helped turn already talented executives into even stronger leaders. Through a mix of workshops and on-the-job trainings, Ingenics and

The focus of the 10th Ulmer Dialogues was how to use systems to their full potential. Conductor and music producer Christopher Gans as well as health expert Sabine Schonert-Hirz gave the enthusiastic audience some great insights and proven advice on the topic.

