



Business Improvement Techniques NVQ **CASE STUDY**

Prism Electronics Ltd

Improving business performance, reducing waste, solving problems

Prism offers a wide range of electronics manufacturing services with full engineering support, concentrating on long-term partnership relationships with each customer. It specialises in the production of modest volumes of complex products, supporting established products with demand-led production and early stage products with rapid turnaround prototype production. Customer service, manufacturing services and engineering support are all provided locally in St. Ives.

Why train?

Undertaking NVQ business improvement training with Cambridge Regional College has helped staff at Prism Electronics Limited become better problem-solvers.

Eight members of staff undertook the government-funded Business Improvement Techniques NVQ Level 2 focusing on 'lean manufacturing' business improvement techniques and waste reduction. They also learned how to take a structured approach to problem-solving.

The purpose of the course was to improve business effectiveness and increase customer service levels whilst providing more rewarding employment for staff.

The course, run by a consultant from Cambridge Regional College, is part of an ongoing process of continuous improvement in the company. The first session took place at the College

and subsequent sessions were held at Prism's St Ives premises.

The consultant had a background in engineering so was not only able to train and facilitate but was also able to contribute to the technical element of the course. Modules included statutory regulations and safety requirements, contributing to effective team-working, applying 5S workplace organisation techniques and creating visual management systems.

As part of the course staff undertook four projects. Two of these were on developing the layout of the workplace to minimise waste, which took into account improving flow through the work area and eliminating non value-adding activities.

Staff can now identify and eliminate waste, create flow and improve quality, leading to greater efficiency and increased profitability.

Training Impact

Lean business practices – Increased customer service levels – Motivated staff

"We have established a forum in Prism to keep the problem-solving project work going. It provides a platform for teams to showcase their progress and get new ideas. It also encourages us all to think about wastage and what we can do to work in a better way.

As well as the direct business benefit generated by quality, cost and delivery improvement, the NVQ in BIT also demonstrates our commitment to continued investment in Prism employees, and providing rewarding employment through training.

Since the NVQ element of the course was completed, Prism staff continue to develop their own projects and are now always thinking about what they can do to make a difference to the business."

David Bance
Head of Operations