

Case Study / “Veolia’s VOOM roll-out supports the circular economy”



Who are Veolia?

The UK leader in environmental solutions, Veolia provides a comprehensive range of waste, water and energy management services designed to build the circular economy and preserve scarce raw materials.

Alan McCann, Business Improvement Manager being presented with his qualification by Phil Murray, General Manager for Asset Delivery



What has been achieved?

As part of an ongoing business-wide, continuous improvement programme, The VOOM project is about ensuring Veolia waste water operations are world class, sector-leading facilities giving the highest possible standards of customer service and maximising operating efficiency. With the introduction of new legislation “Water Bill - Reform of the water industry: Upstream competition November 2013” this objective has become even more important.

“With the introduction of competition in the waste water sector from 2017, we want to make sure we maintain our position as the asset operator of choice by demonstrating our commitment to continuously improving quality, cost and delivery.”

Phil Murray General Manager Asset Delivery

What is VOOM?

Veolia optimised operating and maintenance is a robust program of best practice Lean and Reliability tools and techniques which is applied to each operating site by an expert process facilitator and involving local site teams of operators and maintainers.

“At just one site, Ballyrickard, we’ve seen a 58% reduction in reactive & corrective tasks in the 10 months since roll-out”

The backbone of the programme is the creation of a team of trained and qualified experts in best practice process improvement techniques within the business. Veolia water has chosen EMS Cognito as its partner to develop this team based on the highly-successful Lean RCM process improvement model and the corresponding accreditation.

“So far we have 2 qualified Lean RCM facilitators leading the VOOM programme with a further 3 very close to completing their training. But it’s not just about the facilitators. Sustainable improvement comes from involving the site teams and we have a further 20 operators and maintainers who have been trained to Lean RCM practitioner level who can contribute effectively to the improvement process”

Phil Murray General Manager Asset Delivery

Investing in people

Veolia is aware that people are its greatest resource that’s why they are fully committed to supporting people like Andrew and Alan achieve their potential. By training and developing the skills of the people that work within Veolia, the senior leadership team are demonstrating their desire to give customers the best possible value and service. Having a recognised qualification in business improvement techniques supports Veolia’s desire to invest in its people by setting high standards for employees to aspire to and providing a standard to recruit to.

What is Lean RCM & what does it achieve?

EMS Cognito developed Lean RCM by incorporating the high-productivity principles of Lean Manufacturing from the automotive industry with the rigorous, analysis-driven Reliability Centred Maintenance process strategic to aircraft safety and reliability. The resulting combination, known as Lean RCM, fully engages people in business improvement and generates highly efficient, reliable and productive assets.

What is the qualification?

The Lean RCM qualification is a recognised, externally verified qualification in business improvement techniques centring on Change, Productivity and Reliability that is credited allowing comparison with other academic awards. It is a desirable achievement for progressive Engineering, Maintenance and Operations employees who are seeking to develop and further their careers. It recognises the contribution of operations and maintenance teams in the continuous improvement process as well as being a demonstration of investment in people.

To customers and consumers alike it demonstrates the desire to continuously improve and apply rigorous standards. Internally, it assists with skills measurement, development and progression of people through the organisation.

This is a partly theoretical and practical vocational qualification meaning those who gain accreditation not only understand the theory but have demonstrated the achievement of results using this process.

An interview with Andrew Hampton & Alan McCann newly qualified & promoted Business Improvement Managers for VOOM

As in-house consultants in business improvement and experts in Change-management, Lean and Reliability techniques, Andrew & Alan are now actively engaged in delivering business improvement across a number of regions and projects.

How do you feel about your achievement?

Alan *“The Lean RCM qualification gives it weight behind it and helps to get the transition on the sites. Having gone through the facilitator training it’s broadened my skill set and I am able to offer more”*

Andrew *“Much better because now I know that the work being carried out by operators and maintainers on our sites is worthwhile”*

How has it impacted your role?

Alan *“In a nutshell, before I was a team leader now I am business improvement manager. It means meeting a lot more people and getting much wider exposure”*

Andrew *“Well I know everyone at the airport now very well but joking aside, the more you do the more you realise you can do with it”*



Colleagues of Alan and Andrew going through the final stages of their Lean RCM training

How long has it taken you?

“We started in 2013 – and during the following 12 months ran our own MasterClass programmes and, as part of that, got the qualification”

How many days formal training coaching?

Andrew and Alan both initially took part in an improvement programme on one of the operational sites. An impact Lean RCM Masterclass.

After this initial programme, they received further training on facilitation skills, co-facilitated a 2nd Masterclass programme supported by an EMS Cognito consultant and finally, each of them led their own programme during which an assessor was present.

Colleagues of Alan and Andrew going through the final stages of their Lean RCM training

Andrew *“When you add that up it comes to about 8 weeks training over the course of*

18 months but I spent a lot of additional time developing and tailoring the process for Veolia which meant I was constantly improving my knowledge.”

What does it involve?

Alan *“To begin with, you have to take away everything you know about maintenance and throw it out of the window”*

Andrew *“Previously we were doing the best we could with the knowledge we had but after going through the process we realised how much more we could do”*

Alan *“Getting to a stage where the new skills become second nature. Learning about change and how different people accept it. Helping the team get over the hurdle of fear.”*

What would you do differently?

Andrew *“Spend more time with the manager’s first; get them to understand how it will benefit them”*

Alan *“I agree, spending a little more time with the management team is worthwhile, getting them to personalise the system. We need to separate change management into two approaches; one for the operators and maintainers and one for the managers.”*

What’s next?

The VOOM business improvement team are planning to complete the rollout of the process across their remaining water treatment facilities in Northern Ireland.

In parallel, Veolia has created a separate VOOM team operating at its Scottish wastewater treatment sites and which is rapidly following in the footsteps of Alan and Andrew in optimising the performance of the sites

Alan *“This will mean by the end of 2016, 20% of the waste water being treated in Northern Ireland will pass through a water treatment site that has been optimised by our VOOM process”*

Andrew *“In parallel, all of the operating and maintenance staff will be fully trained to VOOM practitioner level”*

How to find out more:

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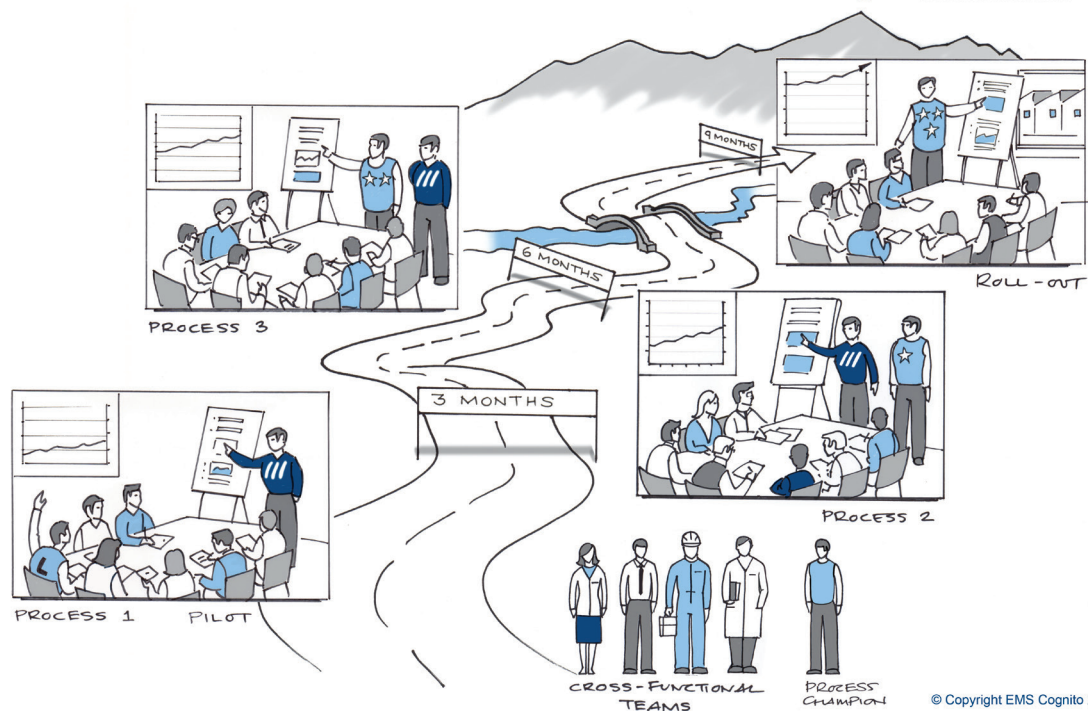
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