5 Case studies Michael Kiel in the years 2012 to 2024

Case Study 1: Restructuring of an industrial company/mechanical engineering

The task/mission
Mandate as interim manager from October 2024 to June 2025. Profitability and future viability of the company must be ensured.

The company
An internationally active German engineering company with mechanical products. The company has 300 employees and produces at a location in southern Germany. The company was taken over by a large industrial group a few years ago and is now to be fully integrated.

The situation
Structures that have grown over the years, process management has not yet been established. SAP S/4HANA must be implemented quickly. Sales forecasts have fallen significantly in the short term. A significant reduction in personnel costs is necessary. The main customer (40%) complains about unreliability (delivery reliability and quality). The managing director is seriously ill and unable to work. A new managing director will be joining in a few months.

The requirements and expectations
The short-term introduction of the new ERP system has led to a deterioration in the ability to act in order processing. The first expectation is that the ability to act will be restored. At the same time, a leaner organization with reduced personnel costs must be developed for the budgeting process. The new organization must then prove itself and continue to be optimized. Approximately 10% of employees must be laid off initially.

My task
Quickly take over the largest division of the company, operations. From this position, synchronize the other divisions in the interests of the group until the new CEO is able to act. Start restructuring by streamlining the organization. After gaining the ability to act, I have to start an excellence process.

The solution
A new, lean and powerful organization has been set up. SAP S/4HANA has been fully integrated as standard. Management positions have been filled. Functioning continuous improvement processes take employee suggestions into account.

The sustainable corporate benefit
A lean, dynamic and cost-effective organization has been created. SAP S/4HANA works as standard and the organizational processes have been structured accordingly. The main customer has regained trust and is now planning follow-up projects. The employee evaluation shows the clear progress in leadership.

Case Study 2: New international factory construction and closure of smaller production sites

The task/mission
Establishment of a capacity- and cost-optimized international production system

The company
An internationally active Austrian mechanical engineering company with mechanical and electronic products. The company produces with 900 employees at 9 locations in Europe.

The situation
Structures that have grown over the years, with each production site acting independently. Production processes are not synchronised. Manufacturing costs appear too high and delivery reliability to the markets is suboptimal.

The requirements and expectations
A common concept for all locations. Reduction in manufacturing costs through greater automation and a reduction in the number of sites.

My task
To present a convincing concept to colleagues at the management level. Initiate successful implementation and report regularly. Convince the managing directors of the branches. Expand 2 production sites as power plants and realise a new building in the Czech Republic

The solution
Establish and coordinate an operations vision and strategy across all sites. Definition of key figures and initiation of various projects to pursue the new direction. Intensive factory planning and realisation of 3 powerplants (2x greenfield, 1x brownfield) and 3 satellites.

The sustainable corporate benefit
In the first step, 3 small production sites were eliminated. A new factory building in the Czech Republic was put into operation in 2022. The production facility at the Vienna headquarters was expanded by 20%. The new, larger production facilities are now more efficient and cheaper thanks to their automation.

Case Study 3: Increasing productivity at headquarters

The task/mission
Increasing the efficiency of mechanical and electronic production.

The company
An internationally active Austrian mechanical engineering company with mechanical and electronic products. The company produces with 900 employees at 9 locations in Europe.

The situation
New product variants and the strong growth of electronics have challenged the proven production orientation. The markets expect shorter delivery times and higher discounts.

The requirements and expectations
Correction and improvement with the use of Industry 4.0 in the entire value chain.

My task
Guarantee successful implementation. Bringing in external support to gain speed.

The solution
Setting up and rolling out a program to create excellence with a focus on lean management, digitalisation, automation and sustainability. The organisation was realigned according to the aforementioned focus areas. The individual projects were commissioned and coached separately. The new management team implemented the task with passion.

The sustainable company benefits
A new, clear and modern production facility has been created. The production facility has received multiple awards for sustainability and efficiency. The key performance indicators are displayed digitally throughout the company.

Case Study 4: Establishing an excellent QM system

The task/mission
Establishment of a high-quality quality management system.

The company
An internationally active Austrian mechanical engineering company with mechanical and electronic products. The company produces with 900 employees at 9 locations in Europe.

The situation
The company has been ISO 9001 certified for over 20 years. The improvement processes are slow and the current quality team is not sufficiently recognised.

The requirements and expectations
QM should provide impetus for the company. Improvement processes should be implemented with a recognised QM team. Customer complaints must be reduced.

My task
I have taken over the task from a colleague in the management team. My many years of experience in QM should make the implementation possible.

The solution
A new, highly motivated QM manager was recruited. Together with the new manager, the proven experts drew up a program covering all facets. The focus of the program was to support production for reliable production processes. A process management system was developed and implemented for the entire organisation. The CIP was combined with lean management.

The sustainable benefits for the company
Customer complaints have fallen dramatically as systematic sources of error were eliminated immediately and by mutual agreement. Regular improvements are now made through audits and CIP. The improvements demonstrably increase productivity.

Case Study 5: 100% guarantee of promised customer delivery dates

The task/mission
Significant improvement in delivery performance for deliveries to customers.

The company
An internationally active Austrian mechanical engineering company with mechanical and electronic products. The company produces with 900 employees at 9 locations in Europe.

The situation
Structures that have grown over the years, with each production site acting independently. Delivery reliability to the customer is assessed differently by production than by sales.

The requirements and expectations
Standardised key figures and obtaining confirmed customer satisfaction from sales.

My task
Analysing the contradictory situation. Creation of sustainable processes to guarantee delivery performance. Regular survey of delivery reliability.

The solution
Separation of tasks into material provision and assembly capacity. Creation of an SCM process. Creation of a digital twin for order processing. Introduction of standard delivery times to avoid misunderstandings.

The sustainable business benefits
The central SCM team continuously ensures high delivery reliability. The high level of digital transparency also creates productivity, as employees reduce time when the order situation allows. Disruptions are recognisable at all times and can be rectified.

Case Study 6: Practiced lean management in an industrial company

The task/mission
Avoidance of waste through the sustainable application of lean management.

The company
An internationally active Austrian mechanical engineering company with mechanical and electronic products. The company produces with 900 employees at 9 locations in Europe.

The situation
A rather unkempt optical condition in the production and warehouse area. The departments work in an uncoordinated manner and with different methods.

The requirements and expectations
A well-structured and visually appealing impression is desired. The employees should be actively convinced of lean management. Successes should be verifiable.

My task
Transformation of the entire production and materials management. The team should live lean management with enthusiasm.

The solution
Project lasting several months with 5 phases (training, pilot project, coordinators, roll-out, excellence). Managers were quickly convinced. Digitisation of the team boards was very expedient.

The sustainable company benefit
The company was audited several times by external experts and awarded the title of LM lead company. The value stream was completely redesigned and has given the company an excellent appearance. Employees live lean management with their digital team boards.

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2024/11/14