

Green Belt Training

Working together with New England Seafood



New England Seafood is a major supplier of fresh and frozen premium sustainable fish and seafood in the UK and one of the largest importers of fresh tuna. NESI customers are among the UK's leading supermarkets which include Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's and Waitrose; as well as smaller retail outlets; restaurant chains; food service markets and wholesale sectors nationwide.

At CQM Training & Consultancy, we are proud to be working with New England Seafood, delivering lean/CI training to their very talented teams. We support them to develop the skills and behaviours which in turn help to improve processes, reduce waste and embed a continuous improvement culture.

Following recent bespoke green belt training at their Chessington site, we thought this would be a brilliant way to capture and celebrate the success of their latest cohort. The teams have achieved fantastic results, gaining well deserved green belt accreditation as well as establishing more than £100k in cost savings through their projects.

Read on to find some valuable insights into this training and the difference it has made within New England Seafood.



"It's fantastic to see the journey the team has been on over the past 9 months, and the confidence they have in applying the tools and techniques."

"I'm excited to see the value this team will bring to the business through their continued project work, and it's already clear to see return on investment through improvements already being delivered."

Emma de Beer
Group Training Manager, NESI

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Jack Pesterfield New England Seafood



Following New England Seafood's bespoke lean six sigma green belt training, we caught up with Jack Pesterfield, Group Asset Care & PPM Manager, to discuss his recent project and accreditation as well as explore what's next for him at NESI.

Introduction

Jack has enjoyed incredible success since starting at New England Seafood in 2020 after gaining his master's in mechanical engineering. Initially on a four-month contract, he has come a long way since then, growing within the organisation, turning his hand to a variety of tasks and projects. As he considers his future aspirations, he feels continuous improvement and lean six sigma will be the driving force for his progression, as well as supporting him in his day-to-day role as this continues to evolve.

We caught up with Jack to discuss his thoughts following his recent Green Belt project and accreditation as well as explore his vision for the future.

Jack, tell us about your project

Working closely with one of my colleague's Diemante, my project was to review and improve wastage on one of our main production lines. We produce a variety of seafood products and the line we focussed on essentially slices up yellow fin tuna and places this into pots, but as a result of this process naturally there is wastage, particularly floor waste.

Through a general overview of the process, we felt that the floor waste was mainly coming from one area but using the DMAIC tools we learned during the programme, such as Pareto and Fishbone, we were able to pinpoint the root cause and identify opportunities to improve it. We found that machinery mistakes resulted in 1,056kg of tuna floor waste from Sep 2021 to Sep 2022 which caused the business to lose £15K of raw material while also increasing yield percentage for the line.

What were the main project outcomes?

Our aim was to reduce the floor wastage by 20% by redesigning the guard on one side of the machine that we identified as the root cause.

Once we installed this and ran the numbers back, we realised the daily average was 26.15% less than before, saving approximately £4,000 per year through minimising this waste.

This was a brilliant result that exceeded our expectation and we subsequently identified other areas we could adopt the same approach, such as our salmon line, to reduce waste even further across wider production activity.

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How did you deal with challenges during your project?

One of the main issues we faced was collating reliable data, as this was dependent on consistent data entry which was prone to human error. We knew that having sound data was key to performing accurate analysis, to understand the true scale of the problem we were trying to fix.

Despite attempts to support the input of data, we realised the best approach was to host a short meeting with team leaders and production managers, so they understood why we were looking at the data, and the improvements we were trying to make.

This really helped understanding of what we were trying to achieve and created more of a buy in. Following this data input became much more consistent and accurate, allowing us to draw more informed conclusions and comparisons. Working as a team with effective communication allowed us to overcome this challenge, which was a really good exercise to bring everyone on board.

What were your key takeaways from the training?

I think the key take away for me is the mindset and approach to problems. Much like when you are studying at college or University for example, you will learn about and use a variety of tools within theory context, however it is only when putting them into practice you realise their true impact.



This green belt training allowed us to implement these tools outside of just theoretical context, and how these can be applied not just within the scope of our projects but also in everything we do. I noticed a real change in focus for myself and the group, being able to adopt the same thought process and approach in my everyday role and supporting others on the understanding of lean and its benefits.

Why do you think it's important for employers to invest in people?

I think it is very important generally to keep people engaged, support growth within the organisation and prepare individuals for more senior roles, so there's no surprises.

New England Seafood are really good at investing in people, with this training being a prime example. I know many employees that have been with our business a long time, so it's clear to me there is an emphasis on internal talent development and progression, which creates a positive working environment and opportunities to grow. Our Group Training Manager, Emma, is brilliant at understanding individual needs and supporting people who want to step up, which is just so invaluable.



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How did you find our development coach's approach?

Wyn was fantastic. We couldn't have wished for a better trainer, not only was he very knowledgeable on the subject matter, but he had a wealth and breadth of industry experience to back it up.

I think it is one thing to have knowledge, but to have the experience of actually putting this into practice really helped to support us to trust what he was saying.

His teaching style was very good, in terms of compounding the knowledge, using real life examples or exercises and then getting us to understand it further in the context of our projects.

He was very approachable and challenged us in a positive way, to think about different approaches and perspectives, and gave us valuable pointers on our project work.

Why do you think Green Belt training is important?

I personally think that continuous improvement/lean has a place in every organisation, as it adds huge value in terms of mindset, approach and ability to improve processes and ways of working.

With the green belt, I think this should form part of the minimum requirements for roles at certain levels, as it really helps in terms of managing projects and dealing with problems for example, that in turn really supports the person and the organisation to succeed. I think New England Seafood are embracing this, so I'm excited to see how this expands further.

Any final comments?

I really enjoyed the programme, and the project outcomes surpassed all expectations, and when you look across all the group projects, together we have made a phenomenal return in terms of financials, innovation and efficiency.

As I mentioned, I think adopting the mindset, and using certain tools in everyday situations will really help in future. I am keen to progress and build on my green belt knowledge to further support in my role and progression, so I'm looking forward and delighted to be starting my black belt next year. Many thanks to Wyn and the CQM team, as well as my employer for arranging this bespoke green belt training.

"Wyn, our Development Coach, was fantastic. We couldn't have wished for a better trainer, not only was he very knowledgeable on the subject matter, but he had a wealth and breadth of industry experience to back it up."

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Stakeholder Feedback

New England Seafood

"I enjoyed all the presentations on the day. The teams did an excellent job of showcasing the tools that had learnt during the course and talking through how they had applied them to real world NESI situations, solving problems and improving situations local to them."

Damian Finney, Group Health & Safety Manager

"It was a pleasure to attend the final green belt session. I was impressed by how confident the team delivered their presentations and the clarity of their decks. The techniques learnt will contribute to our continuous improvement journey for a long time. Congratulations to all."

Yris Bryne, Commercial Finance Manager

"It was a genuine pleasure to see this highly engaged team showcase the tools and techniques they have learnt and used them so effectively driving improvements focussed on two key priorities at our Chessington site: Our food safety culture and our Red Gold Tuna."

Paul Gregory, Head of Operations

"I commend you for your commitment to excellence and for taking the initiative to improve processes within our organisation. Your efforts will undoubtedly lead to increased efficiency, reduced costs, and improved customer satisfaction. I look forward to seeing the positive impacts of your Six Sigma projects in the months and years to come."

Tomasz Skokowski, Head of Technical

"I had an immense feeling of pride as I watched and listened to a talented bunch of our business leaders confidently talk about and provide compelling evidence of the new skills and ways of thinking/working they had been learning about. The level of insight that they have returned through their projects is at a level we have not seen before at Chessington."

Neil McCromick, Site Director

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Trainer Perspective

New England Seafood



Following the delivery of bespoke green belt training at New England Seafood, we briefly caught up with our development coach for the programme, Wyn Griffiths, for his thoughts on the cohort group.

How did you find working with this cohort, what impressed you the most?

I really enjoyed facilitating this group, they all had great enthusiasm to take on board the green belt training.

What impressed me the most is that I noticed a real competitive edge between each of the projects to try and use their new learning and achieve the biggest benefit for the business. This resulted in more than £100k in cost savings across the projects which was a fantastic return on their investment in this training.

This motivation made for some brilliant project outcomes, and it was pleasing to see the pride taken in the results.

What changes did you notice amongst the group during their training?

I think with any training there is always the obvious personal growth especially in each person's confidence level. As it was new ground for a lot of them, to see them go through that learning journey was great, particularly those light bulb moments.

However, this biggest change I noticed was the confidence in being able to stand up and talk about what they had learned, presenting to their projects to their peers and the Senior Leadership team at New England Seafood. Being cross examined is never easy, but the group really embraced it.

Why do you think green belt/lean training is so important to organisations like NESI?

Green belt training provides middle managers with the tools and techniques to stand back and critically review their own ways of working (which they know best). It then gives them a path to make real and lasting changes from within.

New England Seafood were very supportive of the group, and this was led by the Senior Leadership team so they had the right environment in which to learn and carry out the projects, which in turn brings about cost savings for the organisation as demonstrated by the successful project outcomes.

Any final comments?

I think in this group there were a good mix of projects from production, to planning, to back office. This shows that lean methodology can be applied to a wide variety of scenarios and problems, bringing about a structured approach to making continuous improvement.

Finally, I just want to say a tremendous well done to this fantastic group and I look forward to future training with New England Seafood.

To discover more about our bespoke green belt training, click here



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