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REFLEX BOATS AND REFLEX INDUSTRIAL

Reflex Boats manufactures in excess of 200 5 to 7 metre Haines Signature and Chiantii fibreglass boats each year. This business employs 18 factory staff. We purchased PCs for our factory floor and Empower time tracking software for this business two years ago.

Reflex Industrial manufactures all forms of fibreglass products including bus parts, tanks and enclosures. Many are one off custom products to customers designs and moulds. This business employs 15 factory staff. We purchased PCs for our factory floor and Empower software for this business 12 months ago.

Why manual time sheets filled out by our factory staff did NOT work in our factories:

Factory staff:

- They filled in their time sheets at day end or often the next morning
- They knew the budgeted times expected of them for completing manufacturing jobs. So they would "understate" their actual times to equal or be close to the budgeted times expected of them. To make their time sheet add up to 40 hours they put the remaining hours, which was substantial, down to one of the "Downtime" jobs. Our Downtime "Other" was used a lot by staff
- When production management questioned factory staff about the accuracy of their times they usually had "memory loss"
- Sometimes staff would get job #s mixed up. This error is difficult for production management to pick up - so the times recorded on two processes and two boats would go through the system and be recorded substantially wrong
- The sum total of the four problems above meant that our times taken information was highly inaccurate

Management:

- We could not rely on the accuracy on the times taken that were recorded on time sheets by factory staff
- We doubted the accuracy of our budgeted times because they were based on inaccurate actual times
- It took considerable hours each week by administration staff to enter all the time cards into our job cost system
- We had substantial delays in being able to review time taken information and be able to back cost boats and processes

Benefits of PCs on the factory floor and time tracking software:

- Our factory staff prefer to log on and off jobs on the PCs – than fill in their time cards by hand

- Factory staff prefer to record the completion of a job at the end of the job (as opposed to trying to remember the individual times of several jobs at the end of the day or the next morning)
- It is a lot quicker for staff to log in and off jobs – than to fill in job cards
- We no longer wait for roll over of our accounts at month end to get back vital information on time taken on jobs and boats. This information is reported “LIVE” in Empower
- Factory staff can see budgeted times expect of them immediately before they start each job and they see their achieved times immediately on completion of each job. **This drives staff awareness of times, accountability and real productivity**
- Production management can see on their system “LIVE”

who is working on what jobs
time remaining on each current job by each staff member
time taken on previous jobs by each staff member

This provides “LIVE” accurate times which enables production management to hold “on the spot” proactive discussion with factory staff about achieving times – whilst they are working on the particular job

- At both Reflex Boats and Reflex Industrial the system provides us with highly accurate and current and historical information on times for revising our costing and pricing

Net gain from investing in PCs for the factory floor and Empower time tracking

- For years when staff filled in time cards we required 25 factory staff at Reflex Boats. Within 12 months of using Empower we only require 18 staff (and production level have been maintained).
- We expect greater gains in productivity from Empower at Reflex Industrial.
- Empower is a complete management tool that enables me to review performance and productivity with all management and all factory staff

Implementation of PCs on the factory floor and Empower time tracking software into our business was quick and simple all round. The on going support from Empower with new software releases quarterly, on going training, custom development is very good. We have made substantial gains from the system and are very happy. The Empower system is a tool that really works. You are more than welcome to call me to discuss our system. You are also welcome to meet with myself and view the system operating in both our factories.



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