

## Getting to the Root Cause at Snack Brands

### 'You don't learn a new skill with one lesson'

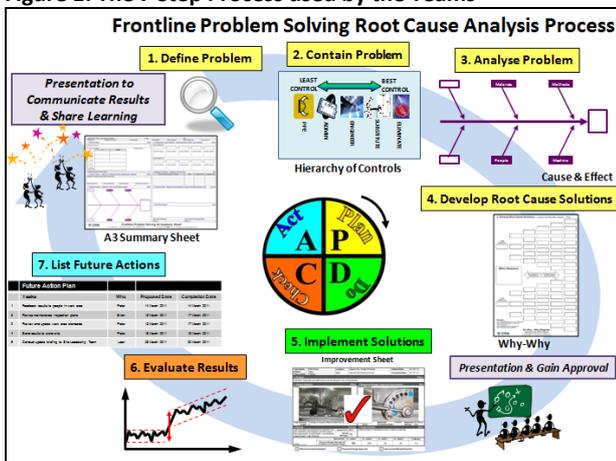
Root Cause Analysis problem solving is a skill that takes time and regular practice to develop, a bit like learning to play a musical instrument – weekly lessons and practice can achieve amazing results. This is the learning at Snack Brands Australia.



**Snack Brands Australia** is one of the largest suppliers of snack foods in Australia. It makes Australia's favourite snacks including CC'S, CHEEZELS, CHICKADEES, FRENCH FRIES, JUMPY'S, KETTLE, NATURAL CHIP COMPANY, SAMBOY and THINS CHIPS.

Following on from a successful **Frontline Problem Solving Root Cause Analysis Development Program** with CTPM last year – refer to CTPM's E-News article published in July 2017, Snack Brands embarked on their second program in May 2018. They identified 16 employees from both their Blacktown and Smithfield sites covering Production, Maintenance, Quality, Product Development and Safety to allow the formation of two effective Cross-functional Improvement Teams.

Figure 1: The 7 Step Process used by the Teams



After confirming the plan for both sites, CTPM, as an approved provider, was again able to seek part-qualification funding through the **Smart and**

**Skilled Program** from the NSW Department of Industry. This training is subsidised by the NSW Government.

The employees that had been identified, all met the funding criteria and after a formal application, the funding was approved for two units from the Cert III & IV in Competitive Systems and Practices qualification:

- MSMSUP390 Use Structured Problem-Solving Tools; and
- MSS403002 Ensure Process Improvements are Sustained.

To commence the program, minimise disruption to operations, the teams at each site participated in two 3-hour kick-off workshops spread over 2 weeks which minimised disruption to operations. For the remainder of the program the teams worked individually with 1.5 hour weekly meetings over a 12 week period.

Each team progressed through three recent frontline problems reported at their site's Daily Review Meetings. The two Blacktown teams worked on and progressed the below problems.

The "SPUDalysers" Team problems addressed were:

- Flume Pump 1 – Blocking;
- Hardbite Fryer Circulation Pump Seal – Leaking Oil; and
- Peel Waste auger – Blocking.

Figure 2: Blacktown's SPUDalysers Team



The “Fantastic Friday” Team problems addressed were:

- Test Piece – Missing after Metal Detector Test;
- Variety Line Hole Punch – Not working; and
- Packing Lines 210 Formers – Shortages.

**Figure 3: Blacktown’s Fantastic Friday Team**



The two Smithfield teams worked on and progressed the below problems.

The “Team 1” Team problems addressed were:

- Pedestrian Light – Knocked Down;
- Thin Chips – Flavour Application; and
- Oil Truck Unloading Bay Drain – Blockage.

**Figure 4: Members of Smithfield’s Team 1**



The “Stitch-up” Team problems addressed were:

- Corn Processing Line – Foreign Matter Control;
- Potato Fryer Oil – Oil Waste; and
- Bosch Bag Maker Former – Shoulder Damage.

**Figure 5: Members of Smithfield’s Stitch-up Team**



At the end of the program, the 4 teams were invited to Snack Brands Australia Head Office to present their outcomes and learning to Senior Management. Each team presented 1 of their problems covered during the program.

At the conclusion of the presentations, all participants were congratulated and presented with their Statements of Attainment for the two units of competency they had successfully completed.

**Figure 6: Receiving their Statements of Attainment at HO**



### So what did they learn?

After acknowledging the excellent presentations from the teams, the question that was put forward to all team members – What did you learn?

Some of the comments from the teams included:

- Training stopped us from jumping to solution-mode rather than analysing the real problem;
- Found the 7 Step Process very helpful as it helped us to be clear on the problem;
- Power of Cross-functional Teams to bring different perspectives to the problem;
- Gives you a structure to follow and allows you to step back and check whether you have done everything;
- The importance of the first step of the 7 Step Process – Define the Problem; and
- All speaking a common language, so we have a standard approach.

CTPM would like to congratulate the teams on their effort in reducing their frustrations in the workplace while achieving great bottom-line benefits for Snack Brands. Overall the funding received through the Smart and Skilled Program covered more than **75% of the cost** to the company.

If you would like to find out more about the Frontline Problem Solving Root Cause Analysis Program or how the Smart and Skilled Program in NSW could assist your site in linking your improvement activities to a part-qualification for your employees, please contact CTPM Head Office on +61 2 4226 6184 or Ross Kennedy on 0418 206 108 or via email [ross.kennedy@ctpm.org.au](mailto:ross.kennedy@ctpm.org.au).