



Performance

SOLUTIONS INC.

Design

Deliver

Inspire

Case Study

The Client

PacMoore is one of the nation's leading contract manufacturers, processing and packaging more than 150 million pounds of dry food ingredients every year for end users like Proctor & Gamble, General Mills, Kraft/Nabisco, Kellogg's, Wrigley, and ingredient manufacturers such as ADM, Cargill and CP Kelco.

The Situation

In the summer of 2004, the food manufacturing industry was facing stricter quality assurance requirements. In order to maintain its competitive edge, PacMoore needed to explicitly develop its policies to meet changing customer and industry standards. Primarily Spanish-speaking low to moderately literate employees needed to learn all the new policies and procedures.

Phase One

The Challenge

With a lean management staff, and one executive fully dedicated to developing policy governance, PacMoore wanted help training its employees on the new policies while also reducing turnover, accident rates, customer complaints, and the time it took for new employees to ramp up to full capacity.

Another concern was communication. Upper management was English speaking while the shop floor was nearly 100% Spanish speaking. Communication down to the shop floor was mainly controlled by two key bi-lingual speakers – the plant manager and the quality trainer, each of whom had distinctly different communication and leadership styles.

The Solution

PSI collaborated with PacMoore to assess the situation. We determined that two key elements were essential to develop a performance solution that addressed the cultural issues and set the building blocks for developing a high-performance workforce. Before a training program could be crafted, key performance standards needed to be established, agreed upon, and made explicit. Furthermore, the unwavering support of a recalcitrant

"I thought I was good at explaining, but then I learned what I didn't know. I was very surprised by what I didn't know. Now, I've really learned how to be an effective trainer."

– QA Trainer

“Learning how to give feedback is a terrific tool – one that we’ve needed for a long time. Now I know how to say what I need to say to get the results I want.”
– Plant Manager

plant manager needed to be garnered in order to gain the trust of subject matter experts (SMEs) and participants so that the program could ultimately succeed.

PacMoore understood that the solution required a process, and a phased approach was agreed upon. **Phase One** included architecting an information structure of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and performance tools for a modularized operation processing customized product. PSI worked in partnership with PacMoore to conduct job analysis and task analysis while facilitating consensus-building on standards and terms. To bridge the language barrier, PSI developed customized pictorial and icon-based templates to be used in English and Spanish. **Phase Two** laid out a path to competency development including a process overview course, structured on-the-job training (OJT), a train-the-trainer course, and a language program.

The delivery of SOPs, performance tools and job descriptions constituted the completion of Phase One. The client was expressly pleased with the quantity and quality of the deliverables. Additionally, the standardization of language began to take hold.

Phase Two

The Challenge

Although documentation was only the first phase and specific training had not yet begun, PacMoore needed to pull back on its ambitious path. There were a lot of organizational changes taking place at once, resources were scarce, and available time was in short supply. They wanted one course that would develop their workforce and meet the project goals.

The Solution

We recognized the supervisory staff and specifically the plant manager as the fulcrum points of the project. Given PacMoore’s desire to develop employees both personally and professionally, and in keeping with the company’s organizational goals and values, PSI recommended:

- Designing an integrated supervisory skills workshop to develop OJT, communication and problem-solving skills
- Introducing the basics of performance management to supervisors and managers

- Developing a customized OJT manual
- Providing strategic coaching for the plant manager.

The Supervisor Skills Training course would be rolled out over a twelve-week period with weekly sessions to allow a “culture of learning” to take hold and to build participant confidence in “learning how to learn.”

“Instead of going around in circles and asking questions that weren’t going to get me anywhere, I am able to use direct questions that help me to resolve problems more quickly.”

– Spanish Speaking Supervisor

PSI used cross-cultural interviewing skills combined with the power of story to fully engage participants and win their trust. At the same time, the executive team participated in preview sessions of the Supervisor Skills Training material in order to experience the classes firsthand and partner in the development process. These preview sessions fostered leadership’s visible commitment to the program while also allowing company leaders the opportunity to polish their own skills.

The course was conducted in English and Spanish and evaluated using a multi-level approach. Initial **results** are positive. Supervisors report:

- Using new skills to make target production goals more consistently
- Having the “tools” to do their jobs more effectively
- Being able to give feedback to employees
- Coming up with better solutions to problems
- Asking questions that get results
- Knowing how to reduce costs

On-going Support

PacMoore remains strongly committed to this program and has requested PSI assistance with the next phase, to include implementation, certification, and coaching. At present PacMoore has had to put Phase Three on hold due to financial constraints associated with its rapid growth. However, the company is able to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, originally targeted as part of Phase One, with an overwhelming response from workers.

Both partners have come to realize that this program is essential for working with an immigrant workforce and ultimately a vital component for company health, growth and expansion. We are exploring ways to continue this critical work.