Optimization of Sloan Valve's Global Supply Chain

Objective
The goal of IPRO 306 was to improve the efficiency of Sloan Valve Company's global supply chain. The main objectives were to develop a new production scheduling protocol and procedure that will ensure that the overstock and inventory shortages were eliminated, as well as to develop a six sigma training package for the company's personnel, that will provide the organization with a six sigma approach in resolving quality issues.

Basic Organization
The team was divided into two sub-projects in order to meet all the objectives presented in this project. The two-subprojects included a "Production Scheduling System", and "Six Sigma package training system". In the end, both outcomes were reunited in order to provide a complete solution and answers to Sloan's issues. A team meeting was conducted every Tuesday to monitor the process of both teams.

Accomplishments
The goals and expectations of the IPRO were completed successfully; in some cases the team surpassed some of them giving the team a great sense of accomplishment. The first sub-team developed and implemented a new scheduling system using SAP software. The second sub-team delivered a whole new procedure to educate Sloan's employees in quality issues and how to understand how quality works inside Sloan's processes. Note: See results in posters.

Critical Barriers and Obstacles
The lack of information in some cases, and the lack of a structured model to follow in others were obstacles that challenged the ability and enthusiasm of the team. But, they were overcome and solved by gathering data from different management levels inside the company. Also, not being able to see the final results was a disappointment to the team, but understandable, due to the timeframe of the project.

Conclusion
Now, the company is using the results to try new ways to schedule its production in order to smooth out the production distortion. The company will also start to give training to its employees using the processes developed by the team. Eventually, the data gathered will give the organization feedback to develop new procedures or methods for production activities and allow them to maintain sustainable improvements.

Next steps
The next IPRO team expected to come in the fall 2009 would be able to monitor and check the impact of the project. This group can also improve the use of SAP and develop new production reports that ease the information management.

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