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Customer case study:

OVAKO IMATRA

Challenge

- Ovako Imatra steelworks wanted to tidy up all workstations in the spirit of 5S
- Items and clutter piled randomly on top of workbenches
- Workstations were used by up to 18 different users each week
- How to select the right solution from amongst plenty of workstation options

Solution

- Robust Treston workbenches were chosen as they help maintain order in the spirit of Lean philosophy
- Workbenches have a wide range of accessories; every tool has a commonly agreed place and no time is wasted in searching for them.
- Workstations are adjustable and compatible, enabling easy adaptation according to changing needs.
- Everything was bought from a single supplier

Ovako Imatra Steelworks modernises

ALL WORKSTATIONS IN THE SPIRIT OF 5S

Many cars' and trucks' ball bearings, windmills and forestry machines all have something in common. Their demanding steel parts are manufactured at the Ovako Imatra plant in Finland, where special-alloy steels for the vehicle and mechanical engineering industries have been manufactured from recycled steel since 1915.

The factory is not celebrating its 100th anniversary by resting on its laurels, however. This year, Ovako's two Finnish units in Imatra and Turenki have implemented the 5S programme, based on the Lean philosophy that has its origins at Toyota's factories in Japan. This world-famous programme aims at tidying up and organising workstations, reducing wastage through new working methods and thus improving efficiency, product quality, occupational safety and well-being at work.

Treston furniture assembled into 40 different workstations

The steelworks employs 600 workers, and every workstation will be renovated in the spirit of the Lean model. The modernisation was started this year by updating 40 shared workstations.

The workstation renovation project was launched in 2015 by an all-day meeting, in which Sami Lääperi, in charge of the 5S development programme at Ovako's Further Processing Department, reviewed all of the affected work stations together with Technical Sales Representative Martti Launiainen from Rastec, a member of the retailer chain Intolog that also represents Treston products.

On the basis of what he saw and heard at the meeting, Launiainen made his proposal and Ovako signed a comprehensive agreement for the renovation of all the workstations. The project was mostly implemented with Treston workstation furniture and products from complementary product groups.

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"Workstations can have up to 18 different users each week. When every tool has a commonly agreed place, no time is wasted in searching for them," says Sami Lääperi (at left), in charge of the 5S development programme at Ovako's Further Processing Department. Pictured on the right are Purchasing Officer Anne Rantalainen and Technical Sales Representative Martti Launiainen.



"No workstation is the same," says Launiainen on the nature of the project.

Robust and durable Treston Workshop workbenches were selected, as they help maintain order and are easily adapted to changing needs in the spirit of 5S. Suitable accessories were added to the benches according to the purpose of each work station. Some benches are equipped with tool trolleys and some with drawers, while others have been fitted with custom-built worktops and specially mounted drawers. Most work stations were lit with Treston HiLite Led lamps with RCD-equipped plugs.

Furniture modifiability and compatibility of crucial importance

"It was important to us to keep things consistent and have compatible furniture at each work station. This makes it easy to modify work stations according to changing needs," says Ovako Imatra's Purchasing Officer Anne Rantalainen. Treston's extensive range and the fact that Ovako was able to purchase everything from a single supplier also tipped the scales in Treston's favour. Ovako signed a comprehensive delivery agreement with Rastec for all workstations, and the project was mainly implemented with Treston's workstation furniture, which Rastec complemented with

products from other product groups.

"We had plenty, plenty of wishes and really needed salesman's expertise to come up with the right solution.", says Anne Rantalainen with a laugh. Ideas for the development and tidying of workstations had been collected by interviewing the users of all workstations before the meeting.

Ongoing cooperation

The factory has three departments, and the furniture of the further processing



THE NEW WORKSTATION. Treston Workshop workbenches help maintain order and can be adapted to changing needs in the spirit of 5S.

department was modernised in the first phase. The tool maintenance workstations were next in line, and the bloom casting department is slated to receive an overhaul later this year.

"We have barely scratched the surface of the project. We will review every single workstation in the factory and office alike," Rantalainen continues.

In addition to providing local support to the customer, retailer Launiainen has received background support from Treston's Regional Manager Jouni Kirkinen in the implementation of the

5S project. Good relations with the retailer network are valued by Treston. "Local representation is very important to us. Local representatives can communicate with customers on a regular basis and listen to all their needs," Treston's Jouni Kirkinen says.



BEFORE THE CHANGE. The old workstations consisted of plywood worktops from the 90s, with items and clutter piled randomly on top.

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