

## LOCATIONS

### United States

Houston, Texas  
Cincinnati, Ohio

### Canada

Toronto, Ontario  
Montreal, Quebec  
Calgary, Alberta

### Latin America

Mexico City, Mexico  
Bogota, Colombia

### EMEA

London, United Kingdom  
Frankfurt, Germany,  
Johannesburg, South Africa



## INCLUDED SOLUTIONS

- Centerline
- SMED
- SMED Kaizen methodology
- Production Optimization
- Coaching and Training

## CONTACT US

+1.281.600.7275  
info@myrtlegroup.com  
www.myrtlegroup.com

# Centerline and SMED Paired Up to Unlock Performance and Capacity in a Growing Market

## CHALLENGE

A global manufacturer in seasonings needed to increase production volume and reduce overtime to match the increasing sales demand, while avoiding an increased cost in their highly competitive market. Working overtime on weekends proved to be costly in a competitive market and proved taxing on their labor force. Besides, the company needed guidance with inconsistent equipment setups and functionality for chokepoint machines. The critical machine centers were adjusted periodically from the beginning of startup on Monday and leading through Tuesday to get the line up to targeted rate but never achieved an on-time goal to have equipment operational. This combination of starting up late and taking multiple days to achieve rate contributed to the losses and unscheduled weekend work to meet sales demand. After two successful projects with the client, the company tapped Myrtle to support them in their centerline expansion journey in a pivotal factory.

Myrtle began with analyzing startup losses and shifted to observing shutdowns as well. The shutdowns had detailed checklists, with no later follow-ups to ensure proper execution. Besides, it required an advanced leadership approach to avoid liability issues. Inefficiency in shut down performance led to additional startup work, which negatively impacted the team's ability to hit targets.

Furthermore, Myrtle found various improvement opportunities in two lines that were in the scope of the project. For one line, Myrtle ran seven different product SKUs and sometimes three to four different SKUs in the same week. For the other line, the team ran two SKUs. Among them, one SKU on each line was found to be challenging for the site because both required to be optimized to run through their processing systems going to their packaging units. While one lacked heat control for a product which made the packaging equipment inefficient to process; the second SKU had too much liquid in the product mix. Additionally, various opportunities arose during their startup process, including not clearing water from their packaging systems before startup, which also led to packaging problems with processing the product.



*Myrtle built capability of teams and leaders to execute and sustain the program."*

– Continuous Improvement manager

## APPROACH

Myrtle rolled up their sleeves and began with focusing on restoring the base condition of the equipment with the shop floor operators and mechanics. The team analyzed all equipment centers for defects with all core work center teams, followed by registering them on a defect log for transparency for needed repairs. The core work center mechanic accessed all defect logs and created work orders and made critical repairs to equipment. The Myrtle team then created a work prioritization meeting with the defect register in input and Operations and Maintenance leadership. This new meeting broke down silos of the departments and allowed for cohesive and synergistic actions to be taken with the adjusted alignment of the departments. To sustain the base condition, the team installed a CIL program. Myrtle utilized OEM manuals and OEM technician experience to support the creation of the CILs. Myrtle created cleaning tasks and inspection tasks to identify wear, contamination, and defects on the equipment. Besides, the team trained and installed lubrication tasks to ensure the longevity of parts on the equipment. The CIL tasks were plotted on a tracking form and mounted on a visual board for periodic tracking of operator performance against the standards, along with the defect register for ongoing baselining of the equipment.

Myrtle also utilized the core teams to identify all adjustment points on their equipment centers. The adjustment points were match-marked for visual cues for the current best practices for operating the equipment. These were then boiled down to layout items requiring adjustments versus items that did not require adjustments. The next step established a plan to eliminate the unneeded adjustment points and monitor the ones for the frequency of adjustments. The team issued data collection forms to operators for frequently adjusted points to identify upper and lower control limits for the adjustment points and to determine the Centerlines and run the right settings. Besides, Myrtle created operating windows and placed them on tracking forms for periodic monitoring of the parameters. This laid out the foundation to change the culture of adjusting equipment parameters in place of finding the root cause of problems.

Once Centerlines were created and tracked, they were placed on the visual boards again for transparency on how operators were performing against their standards. Myrtle acted as mentors to the client team and coached them to troubleshooting guides, change control, escalation, and necessary problem-solving steps. Furthermore, the team deployed a skills matrix and competence building plan to ensure employee skills met the required competency levels needed to sustain the program. This competency building plan was developed based on the most significant gaps to target the desired skills. Based on the gaps, training sessions were scheduled to increase the most competence with each session planned and executed.

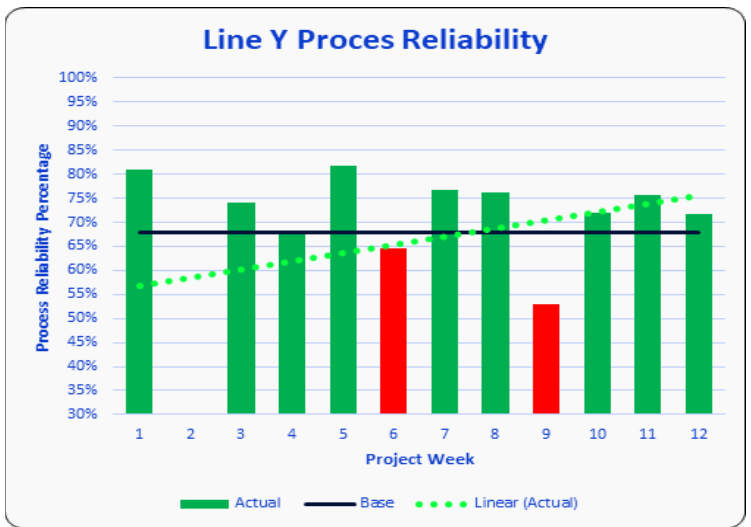
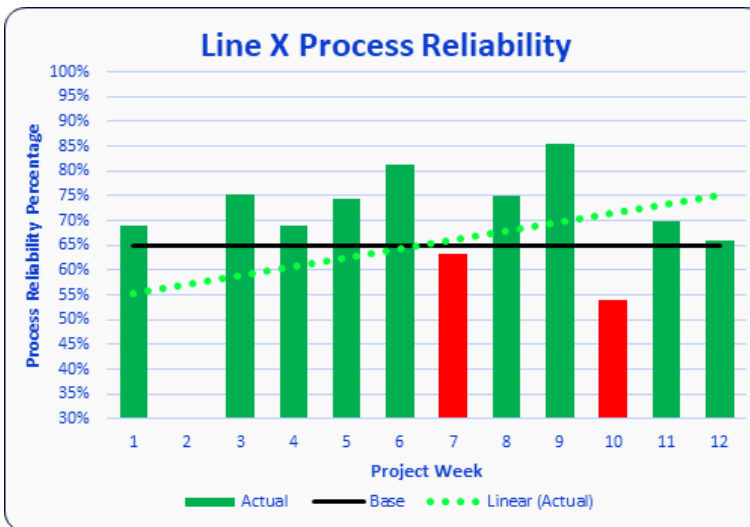
Once the team restored operating consistency and realized vertical startups from the Centerline program, Myrtle shifted focus to compress time and make startups more efficient. The team deployed their SMED methodology and completed in a Kaizen format for expediency. A team charter was created, and a team was formed using members representing all shifts and members of leadership and the shop floor. One quick win the team made was moving a PM conducted during startup and production time to before startup or during planned downtime. This adjustment saved eight hours of startup time on one of the five chokepoint machine centers. After the quick win, the team moved through the eight steps of SMED and registered the current changeover by documenting the ongoing process. This registered changeover was then analyzed for internal and external activities, and an ECRS (Eliminate, Combine, Reduce, Simplify) performed on the internal activities. The team created an action plan, used an impact-effort matrix to prioritize actions, and executed the action efficiently.

## SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

Myrtle brought an unmatched combination of deep technical expertise to guide and implement sustainable solutions that showed steadily increasing results for both lines. The process reliability increases were realized almost immediately by the end of the 12-week engagement. Line X peaked at 85.4% process reliability on a baseline of 65%, and line Y peaked at 81.7% process reliability on a baseline of 68% and achieved above baseline 9 of 11 recorded weeks for both.

The results were achieved through the installation of the Centerline program and changing the behaviors of the operators through continuous education and training. The average competence of the shop floor increased from a level 1 to a level 2.2 on the skills matrix. The reinforcement and floor coaching to the deployed processes ensured and validated the newly inducted skills and transformed into new behaviors that unlocked potential in the people within the organization to achieve step-change results.

Finally, the SMED Kaizen methodology yielded impeccable results. The team accomplished a 44% reduction in changeovers. The baseline changeover time for the lines was 480 minutes, but with Myrtle’s expertise, the team achieved a 270-minute changeover after only one initial training on the third shift. The seasoning manufacturer is now self-sufficient to drive behavior change on the floor with the new techniques and tools that Myrtle brought through continuous coaching and training.



### RESULTS:

- Line X peaked at 85.4% process reliability on a baseline of 65%
- Line Y peaked at 81.7% process reliability on a baseline of 68%
- The average competence increased from level 1 to 2.2 on skills matrix
- The team accomplished a 44% reduction in changeovers

Do you need to unlock your performance and capacity? Are you ready for a step change in performance? If so, contact us today or visit [www.myrtlegroup.com](http://www.myrtlegroup.com) to learn more.