



Five simple ways to improve warehouse efficiency

An efficient warehouse is critical for customer satisfaction because it helps ensure quick, accurate shipments. If you're looking for some tips to improve your warehouse operations, consider the following:

1. Maximise and optimise all available space. Rather than expand the footprint of your warehouse, consider better use of vertical space. Adding taller storage units and the right equipment to pick and store material can help you keep more in the same square footage, rather than adding expansion costs. In addition, think about the type and variety of shelving used. Storing small items on pallet racks wastes space, and makes it easy to misplace items. Rather than using the same racks throughout your warehouse, you may need various types of shelving for different materials. Also, try using standardised bins to help keep shelves neat and orderly

2. Lean Inventory. Adopting lean inventory for your warehouse is just as important as it is in manufacturing. The basic premise of lean is only what you need, and nothing more. Possibly reduce or eliminate safety stocks, and try to get suppliers to deliver smaller quantities more frequently

3. Adopt enabling technology. A warehouse management system (WMS) or an ERP system with a strong WMS module can improve efficiency by suggesting the best routes and methods for picking or put-away. In addition, the system provides automated pick lists that can be sent to mobile readers and devices to help eliminate mistakes and reduce wasted time and paper. Your warehouse will be neater and greener. Using barcode or radio frequency identification (RFID) readers can improve accuracy of transactions, and reduce picking errors. In fact, research conducted at the University of Arkansas shows that using RFID increased inventory accuracy by 27 per cent in just 13 weeks

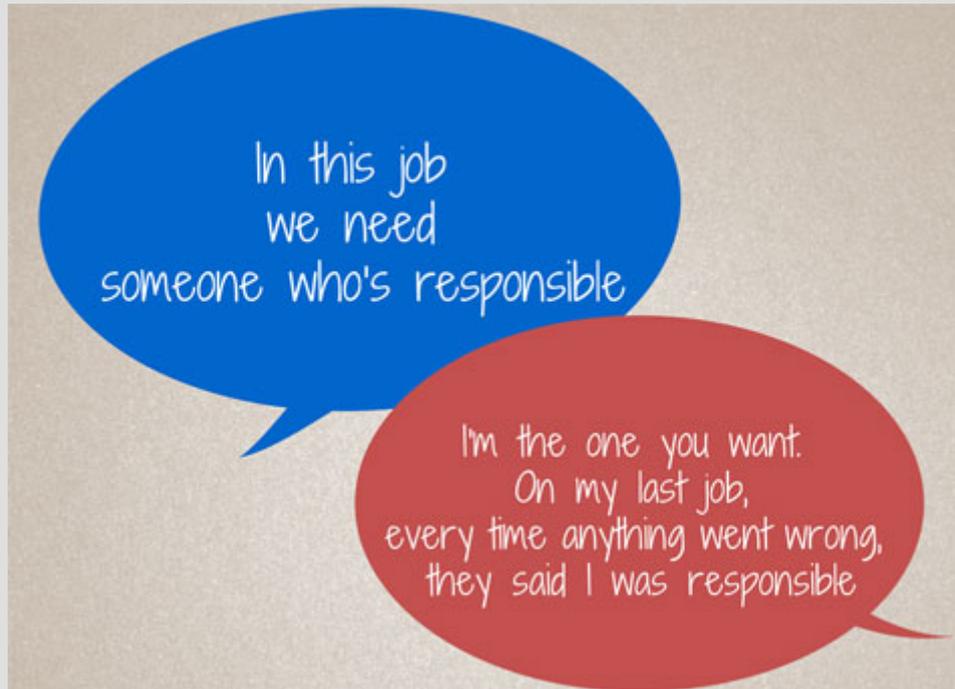
4. Organise workstations. Organising workstations improves productivity because workers do not have to search for tools or equipment. Use the "5S" method from lean manufacturing to ensure your workstations are as organised as possible. It consists of: Sort; Set in order; Shine; Standardize; and Sustain — all techniques designed to keep clutter at bay, reduce errors, and improve safety and organisation

5. Optimise labour efficiency. If your WMS doesn't have the ability to generate efficient picking plans, create them manually. Analyse your material usage patterns, and store high-volume items together near the front of the warehouse to eliminate travel time. Also, store items that are frequently sold together near one another. Basically, you will streamline operations if you try to keep the items you pick most often in the most accessible locations to eliminate picking delays

Improving warehouse efficiency is as much about common sense and the right storage equipment as it is about fancy picking algorithms. Follow these simple steps and watch your efficiency soar

Happy Spring

Spring has sprung with a sense of humour !!!



Wishing you a relaxed Heritage Day (Heritage Day 24th September)



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