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## Manufacturing Process Improvement Sample Proposal

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Bob Millings  
CEO  
Lakota Cardboard  
5003 Shoreline Drive  
Tacoma, WA 98433

Mr. Millings,

You asked me to undertake a study of our manufacturing process with the intention of improving it any way we can so we could be more competitive. To this end, I hired Industry Consultants Inc., a group of efficiency consultants who have two experts in paper manufacturing processes on their staff.

This packet includes their findings and recommendations and my recommended plan. I think you'll be pleased.

Sincerely,

Maria Walters  
Vice President  
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# PROJECT

## **Manufacturing Process Efficiency Improvement**

Prepared for: Bob Millings  
CEO

Prepared by: Maria Walters  
Vice President



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# OBSERVATIONS

Industry Consultants Inc. made the following observations about our manufacturing process at Lakota Cardboard.

On September 3 and Sept 4, two industrial engineers—Lynda Burghart and Patrick Littlehorse—who specialize in paper product manufacturing, walked around the manufacturing floor with stop watches and video cameras and studied our process.

These are their observations:

● **The most time-consuming part of the process is changing the paper rolls on the corrugator.**

**Situation:** Three rolls of kraft paper must be loaded onto the corrugators at the beginning of each job, and sometimes new rolls must be loaded when one runs out. At the end of a job, usually one or more of the paper rolls must be switched out for a different weight of paper.

For each loading process, a forklift operator must drive to the storage area, retrieve the correct roll of paper, transport it back to the corrugators and load it. This process typically takes 20 to 35 minutes. For each swap process, the paper roll must be removed from the corrugator, transported back to the storage area, and then a new roll must be selected, transported, and loaded. A swap process typically takes 45 to 50 minutes. Because of the extreme weight and size of the paper rolls, transporting and loading or removing the paper rolls is a dangerous and time-consuming job; for safety reasons, almost all other work must stop in the area while paper is transported, loaded, or unloaded.

**Significance:** Because swapping paper rolls happens multiple times during a manufacturing shift, the process of moving the paper rolls causes a lot of down time among the workers on the manufacturing floor.

**Remarks/Recommendations:** Using the new ECM software program, specifications for all jobs should be entered into the computer as they are received. The ECM program will then batch all jobs that use the same rolls of paper together. This will save significant time and money as fewer paper roll swaps will be needed.



● **Significant amounts of cardboard are wasted in the cutting process.**

Situation: When box blanks are cut at the cutter, excess cardboard that does not fit the job pattern is discarded.

Significance: Lakota Cardboard is paying for paper and glue and time to create that cardboard; simply throwing it out increases our recycle fees and wastes money and resources.

Remarks/Recommendations: The ECM program can batch together jobs that use the same cardboard specifications, and create an efficient cutting pattern that will meet the needs of multiple jobs. Using the ECM software should result in less waste of cardboard at the cutting stage.





# PROJECT PROCESS SUMMARY

Lakota Cardboard currently uses the following procedure in a typical shift at the cardboard manufacturing plant. Each job (work order) repeats this process.

- The shift manager schedules jobs, ranking them according to project deadline or size, with those jobs that need to be completed first or those that are larger being processed first.
- Appropriate rolls of kraft paper for the job are moved via forklift from storage and loaded onto the corrugator.
- The corrugator is set to the fluting specified in the order, and the corrugated medium is steamed, crimped, and glued to the liner papers.
- The finished cardboard moves down the conveyor belt to the cutting machine.
- The cutting machine is manually set for the job and box blanks are cut.
- The finished box blanks move to the flexo machine area.
- The box blanks are printed, waxed if required, and glued.
- Finished boxes are stacked and moved to the banding machine.



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