What is CLIP?

The Construction Lean Improvement Programme (CLIP) aims to boost business performance and profitability.

Over the last four years, CLIP has adopted lean techniques for use in the construction industry. It has worked successfully with more than 150 companies across the construction supply chain to achieve productivity improvements of 40% to 50% in key processes.

The CLIP process works by focusing companies on improving the quality, cost, delivery and efficiency of a product or service to achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction. It provides the knowledge and skills required to take the best form of lean construction and blend it into a practical tool that companies can implement effectively. Each company’s CLIP programme consists of tailored improvement activity, overseen by a CLIP engineer who works with the team at every level to make practical improvements and learn from example by example.

The CLIP Tools

ISO

A series of lean precepts underpinned by the standard, lean is the key to understanding ISO 9001, the standard for customer satisfaction. CLIP improves on the standard, focusing solely on project success.

Process Mapping

The visual breakdown of a process, identifying who does what, why and how. Process mapping helps improve understanding of the process, identify waste and opportunities for improvement in the process.

Collaborative Planning

The allocation of the work stream and scheduling. CLIP helps companies make better use of their resources and ensure consistency in planning. This enables companies to achieve higher levels of productivity and efficiency.

Value Stream Mapping

The analysis of the value stream including customer and supplier. CLIP helps companies to identify areas where value is added or lost and therefore improvements are possible.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

A set of instructions that can be distributed across all elements of a company. CLIP helps companies to reduce waste and increase productivity, thus making it easier to achieve their objectives.

Lean Meeting

A series of regular meetings, usually held once a month, to discuss company progress. CLIP helps companies to identify areas of improvement and therefore makes it easier to achieve their objectives.

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www.theCLIP.org.uk
The NSCC CLIP Project

NSCC is working with the Construction Lean Improvement Programme (CLIP) to deliver lean construction techniques to Specialist Contractors. CLIP aims to improve processes to reduce waste and improve quality, a higher level of customer satisfaction and increased profits.

With the support of ConstructionSkills, NSCC funded a project to provide CLIP training to five Specialist Contractors. Each company involved in the project worked with a dedicated CLIP programme manager for 12 months, using a range of lean tools to improve business performance.

This brochure summarises the experiences of the five companies, exploring how the CLIP process worked for each of them and the improvements and savings that they made.

For further information on CLIP and how it could work for your business, call NSCC on 0844 249 5331.

The Five Participants

Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering (BBCE) – one of the UK’s leading plant equipment suppliers, which started the CLIP initiative in plant facilities in Nuneaton.

Redhill Building – a structural and civil engineering firm with over 30 years of experience.

John Pk Cymers Ltd – a specialist company employing around 20 people, which focuses on external wall insulation and associated works.

Lincoln Contractors – a general building support services company, operating in social housing, housing, new build, local authority, commercial and maintenance projects.

FORM Group – a growing company that operates specialist services for 5 years.

NSCC used CLIP to improve office processes and develop robust, technical systems.

Aims and aspirations

We wanted to see if CLIP could address the cultural issues within our organisation that needed improvement and also lead to a total improvement through the process.

How the CLIP process worked

We adopted the basic principles of CLIP, which includes the concept of standardisation, as well as the lean improvement tools that proved so useful in this improvement. We discovered where we might have been too flexible to our customers and found a better way of working.

As a result of our nine-month programme, our office environment improved. We unveiled a new office suite, which involved a thorough clean-up of the space.

Along with an update of our office furniture, we introduced a new office layout.

We also created a range ofprocesses, including Ishikawa and Gemba walk, which were no longer required and were removed. The remaining issues were placed in a back-up system, so we were able to manage them effectively.

We received a flood of positive feedback from the office in the last three months of our programme, and we were able to treat ourselves to a new office layout.

The benefits of CLIP

CLIP enabled us to transform our office operations, thus improving our workplace environment and better service to our customers.

Benefits of CLIP are slowly being introduced in the workplace, and we are looking to expand on them in the future.

The future of CLIP

We believe that the future of CLIP is bright. We are looking to expand on the work that we have done so far, and we are confident that it will continue to improve in the future.

Key learning points

Lean thinking is not just restricted to site operations. It works just as well in the office environment where lean processes can result in tangible benefits.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that detail good, lean processes are a vital tool in any office, and especially in a busy environment with personnel that work flexible hours.

Visually mapping a forthcoming project can be a valuable technique that gives a clear, visual plan of how and when resources will be deployed.
Aims and expectations

We expect CLIP to give us a clearer understanding of our current working practices and productivity and help us to create standard formats that would save time and resources and predict future requirements.

Our main aim when we started the CLIP process was to improve the business and reduce waste. To achieve this, we first identified key processes and sites and then looked at how to improve them.

How the CLIP process worked

During our initial CLIP meeting, we reviewed the activities in the repair workshop and stores department to ensure we had a full understanding of these, which were undertaken by representatives from all areas of the plant including engineers, mechanics, inspectors and managers. The invited directly observed work and waste and recording the steps involved to undertake these activities.

We used the CLIP process to improve the repair work and repair processes that there was a significant proportion of work that did not add value to the workshop’s service. This included, for example, delays to jobs that were due out of stock, and moving between areas of the facility, for example, the work areas and stores.

We found that this is a powerful tool for improvement: a good work environment and organisation, and the reduction of waste.

Benefits and savings

Efficiency has been significantly improved both within the workshops, where less time is spent travelling between work areas, and the stores department.

The improved layout and organisation within the stores areas has been found to quickly and stock levels better managed.

This has meant fewer re-issues of small items to costs and work and stock levels been reduced. More effective maintenance has reduced out-of-sites and improved the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the store’s operation.

The new layout and organisation has improved performance and efficiency on site and ultimately reduced the time that people spend on productive work as well as developing the department.

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Future use of CLIP

We will continue implementing all that has been learnt during the CLIP activities in the workshops and the stores, and are now further refining our processes to benefit from the initial groundwork undertaken through CLIP.

The CLIP process has led to a useful cross-department discussion bringing together staff that would not normally meet in ways that not only enables engagement with the project but also creates a shared understanding of the work in its current state.

We are in the process of implementing our future state and it is clear that it will pay dividends once it is established. If we continue on this course and continue to improve, then we will continue to improve our business’s competitiveness.

We have been focusing on the projects and, in particular, the workshop, where we have taken a structured and methodical approach to the process and have been able to achieve improvements in both efficiency and productivity.

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Key learning points

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