

LEADPOINT & TRI-COUNTY RECYCLING SUCCESS BUILT ON COLLABORATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Tri-County Recycling & Solid Waste of Appleton, Wisconsin, had a problem at their materials recycling facility (MRF). The county was losing money due to poor quality and missed items on the sort line. The site's leaders were struggling with turnover and the inconsistent number of temporary employees on the line every day. Line leads felt they couldn't rely on the training being delivered to sorters, which caused them time and rework. After more than 20 years with their current staffing partner, the county was ready for a change. Leadpoint Business Services won the staffing

contract through RFP and during the conversion retained 96% of the existing workforce. In the first 30 days after implementing its high-performance work team model, Leadpoint decreased Tri-County's headcount and increased the value of its output by more than \$25,000.

This case study details how Leadpoint won the business and implemented a high-performance work team model that generated these strong results in such a short time frame.

THE PLAYERS: TRI-COUNTY & LEADPOINT

Tri-County Recycling & Solid Waste of Appleton, Wisconsin, provides residents and businesses in a three-county area with recycling and landfill disposal services, along with education, waste reduction and material reuse ideas.

Leadpoint Business Services is a workforce optimization company specialized in the waste and recycling

industry. Unlike traditional staffing companies, Leadpoint focuses on performance, not headcount. Since 2000, Leadpoint has helped companies make better decisions about how to maximize their workforce to improve productivity, efficiency, and profitability. Based in Phoenix, the company provides its data-driven approach for optimizing performance to organizations nationwide.

CHALLENGES

Despite some 20 years of partnership with a non-profit staffing agency, Tri-County's leaders were ready for a change in their workforce strategy. They were experiencing inconsistency in headcount, high turnover, lack of motivation among the workforce and a low sense of urgency and accountability from the staffing partner. If the sorter workforce wasn't reliably on the job every day, ready to work, safe and managed well, the county couldn't hit its production and revenue goals.

The quality and missed items on the sort line is another issue that was costing Tri-County money, some \$350k per year by one estimate. Better training and oversight of the temp sorter workforce were solutions the county explored, but the results just weren't there.

CONVERTING THE EXISTING WORKFORCE

Anytime there's a change in management, employee tenure is at risk. In this case, when Leadpoint took on workforce optimization of Tri-County's recycling facility, the county faced two big challenges:

1. How can we be sure our existing workforce doesn't quit?
2. How do we keep operating during the transition and before the new solution is fully implemented?

These challenges were addressed by both Tri-County and Leadpoint, with each partner stepping up to ensure the existing workforce not only stayed but stayed productive and motivated to improve.

Leadpoint's goal with any new client is always to create the least amount of disruption possible and to retain 100 percent of the existing workforce during a transition.

When the change was announced, leaders on all sides wanted to create and communicate a united front. Leadpoint was on site alongside facility leaders and representatives of the outgoing staffing provider. The workforce was presented with a set of attractive options and benefits that were part of the contract among the parties.

A frustrating situation was only getting worse at a time when the county needed their production to get better so they could stay competitive, deliver on their service agreement with the county's households and businesses, and meet their revenue targets.

The county issued an RFP for workforce services in November 2017. Leadpoint, who was referred to Tri-County by a recycling consultant, did its due diligence, submitted a proposal, and won the business. The new partnership between Tri-County and Leadpoint was launched March 2018.

The partnership provided more than 60 employees across the two-shift operation.

The outgoing staffing company encouraged its workers to keep their jobs and stay with the new vendor, Leadpoint. For anyone who chose not to stay, the staffing company offered to place them in jobs with their other customers.

Tri-County also wanted the current employees to stay – not just remain on the job but stay “whole” from a benefit and opportunity perspective. By contractual agreement with Leadpoint, employees were guaranteed no lapse in medical benefits, their PTO balance was paid out AND put on the books with Leadpoint, and all cost of living adjustments previously agreed to were maintained.

This unique arrangement was a win-win-win for the new and previous management and, importantly, for the workforce. It was a key driver of a 96 percent retention rate.

For its share, Leadpoint created a contingency plan and workforce pipeline so it could respond immediately if there was a mass walkout of employees. Leadpoint also brought in an on-site manager with strong recycling industry experience, supervisory skills, and management abilities. Her credibility created confidence among the employees and made an immediate positive impression between Leadpoint and Tri-County.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Implementing a new team, a new workforce optimization approach, and new performance standards is no easy task.

It can take up to 90 days to thoroughly cover the basics:



In this case, the implementation timeline was relatively quick:



During this time, benchmarking data were established, giving Leadpoint a point of reference for its results. In addition, a safety stand-down was put in place before the on-site manager took complete ownership of Leadpoint's workforce optimization program.

These two steps paved the way for Leadpoint's program to do what it promised for Tri-County and its stakeholders.

A CULTURE OF SAFETY & INCIDENT PREVENTION

Workplace safety is a top concern for Leadpoint and Tri-County. By working together, Tri-County was able to improve the facility's safety culture. As Leadpoint took over MRF staffing, they introduced a safety orientation video, quizzes and daily pre-shift paid time for employees to review Daily Toolbox Safety Topics.

Leadpoint's line leader, along with supervisory staff, continually monitor the work environment and provide employees with one-on-one attention to address potential safety issues. Leadpoint also organized a safety team with volunteers from their line workers, which created an environment of open dialog for incident prevention.

“ This partnership goes well beyond just staffing. The team has embarked on a dynamic and sophisticated endeavor to monitor, document and show production and quality results via a customizable, real-time dashboard provided by Leadpoint. The dashboard is shared not only with sorting staff within the MRF, but also with external stakeholders to show trends and improvements over time. ”

Ryan McNichols,
Recycling Operations Supervisor
Tri-County Recycling

LEADPOINT DELIVERED RESULTS

Leadpoint promised six primary cost saving and profitability outcomes for its high-performance work team program at Tri-County.

So, how did Leadpoint do?

- ✓ Reduced turnover through the on-site manager's direct supervision of the workforce
- ✓ Leveraged its industry experience to bring new employees up to speed quickly
- ✓ Increased material picks per minute (PPM) for each sort line
- ✓ Increased the quality of each bale
- ✓ Increased the number of bales produced by improving the uptime efficiency of the process
- ✓ Reduced the amount of material that goes to the landfill

“ After 30 days with Leadpoint, we did a paper bale composition study. The total value of our output went up significantly, by more than \$25,000. ”

Ryan McNichols,
Recycling Operations Supervisor
Tri-County Recycling

CONCLUSION

Leadpoint and Tri-County are admittedly in the early stages of their business relationship. In the months to come, Leadpoint will continue to improve bale quality: the goal is to get as close as possible to 100 percent bale perfection.

To get there, Leadpoint will focus on what it can control: the workforce. It will continue managing and training for good material identification, understanding the priority picks, and ensuring the line is picked properly.

The Leadpoint-Tri-County partnership was successful because:

- ✓ Tri-County was 100% collaborative and engaged from the start and throughout the implementation process.
- ✓ Clear expectations and accountabilities were set and agreed to among all parties.
- ✓ Leadpoint assigned a highly-experienced on-site manager.
- ✓ There were few hiccups during the implementation process.

ABOUT LEADPOINT

Since 2000, Leadpoint has helped companies in the waste and recycling industry make better decisions about how to maximize their workforce to improve productivity, efficiency and profitability. Based in Phoenix, Arizona, the company provides its data-driven approach for optimizing performance to organizations nationwide.

Learn more about Leadpoint's high-performance work team model and how it can deliver tomorrow's workforce solutions for your recycling operation today.

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