CASE STUDY

Waste processing | Germany | 6 months

From 0–90% swings to steady 75–90% uptime

75–90%
steady uptime, from swings of 0–90%

1–2 a month
metal recovery points outside limits, down from about half

~30 a month
safety observations, up from almost none

THE CLIENT

A waste processing company with four sites in Germany. We coached the managing director and operations director across the business, and focused the operational work on one site. The figures here refer to that site.

THE PROBLEM

The business was profitable, but the operation was statistically out of control. Uptime ranged from 0% to the high 90s and averaged around 50%, with each hour valued at €1,000. Metal recovery, the main driver of profit, was good on average but unstable.

Turnover was high, engagement was low, safety issues went unreported, and there were no structured management routines. Spillage had become normal. The shop floor chased throughput over metal recovery, and leaders believed the answer was more people.

WHAT WE DID

- **Listened first.** A culture audit showed what it was really like to work there and found quick wins to build trust.
- **Tested the "more people" belief.** Staff were around 60% utilised, or around 40% including process waste, against an optimum of 85%. The headcount debate ended.
- **Built daily routines.** Coached stand-ups made performance visible, put metal recovery first, and gave every issue an owner and a deadline.
- **Changed habits, not just systems.** Checks became real prevention. Breakdowns became chances to fix things properly and teach people.
- **Developed the leaders.** The MD and operations director learned to focus on outcomes, and to build habits in others rather than apply system fixes to behaviour problems.

THE RESULTS

- Lower staff turnover and visibly better engagement.
- Operators raising problems instead of walking past them, with natural leaders emerging.
- Staff challenging unsafe behaviour, including from contractors and drivers.
- Leaders coaching rather than reprimanding, asking what caused a problem, not who.

> *I can see the change in my people.*
>
> PRODUCTION MANAGER

> *I've learned a lot about leading people, and about how to actually build habits and behaviours in a team.*
>
> OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

If your operation is busy but not in control, let's talk.

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