



Case Study

Executive Summary

Sara Lee is a global manufacturer and marketer of several well-known brands of high-quality food and personal care products. The North American Bakery division is 17 % of the overall sales revenue at Sara Lee. The bakery division is made up of small to medium-sized bakeries around the country of which many are a part of the organization through acquisition. While each bakery is organized and accountable to the corporation, each has its own unique culture and operational nuances. Key initiatives regarding quality and manufacturing processes require a higher level of consistency across all bakeries. While an obvious business objective, consistency across each field operation brings significant challenges.

The Business Challenge

The Sara Lee bakery located in Mobile, Alabama was struggling to achieve target production results and employee turnover. The human resources and operation leaders at the local and at the corporate level had launched several initiatives to address both problems, but none produced the needed results. The organization was at the point at determining whether or not it was financially responsible to keep the bakery open.

How Connect the Dots Helped

The human resources team, both corporate and local, decided to make one more investment to try and surface and assess the actual issues that were plaguing the Mobile bakery. Connect the Dots was brought in to provide an external perspective on what was keeping the bakery from reaching its objectives. Connect the Dots customized their assessment model to collect current state data, analyze and recommend action steps based on data gathered and objectives. The extensive analysis focused on the current state of the employee population, labor market, human resources and businesses processes, and communication vehicles and how work is carried out.

Value Delivered

Trends and information surfaced as a result of the analysis presented the Mobile leadership team with a specific set of recommendations focused on recruitment processes, employee onboarding and on-going training; reward and recognition practices; leadership communication and organizational structure opportunities. Implementation of key recommendations had a significant positive impact on employee selection and retention, as well as leadership communication. The decision was made to keep the bakery open and operating as a result of the impact of those recommendations that were implemented.