

Pharmaceutical Packaging Company Unlocks Performance Through People and Process

A long-standing leader in the pharmaceutical, health, and beauty packaging industry based in New Jersey spent over six decades delivering innovative solutions to their customers. With a strong reputation for flexibility and a customer-first approach, the company had built a stable foundation and was well-positioned for expansion.

As market demand accelerated and growth opportunities increased, the organization faced internal challenges that threatened to stall its momentum. Senior leaders found themselves entrenched in daily operations, leaving little time for strategic focus to expand operations.

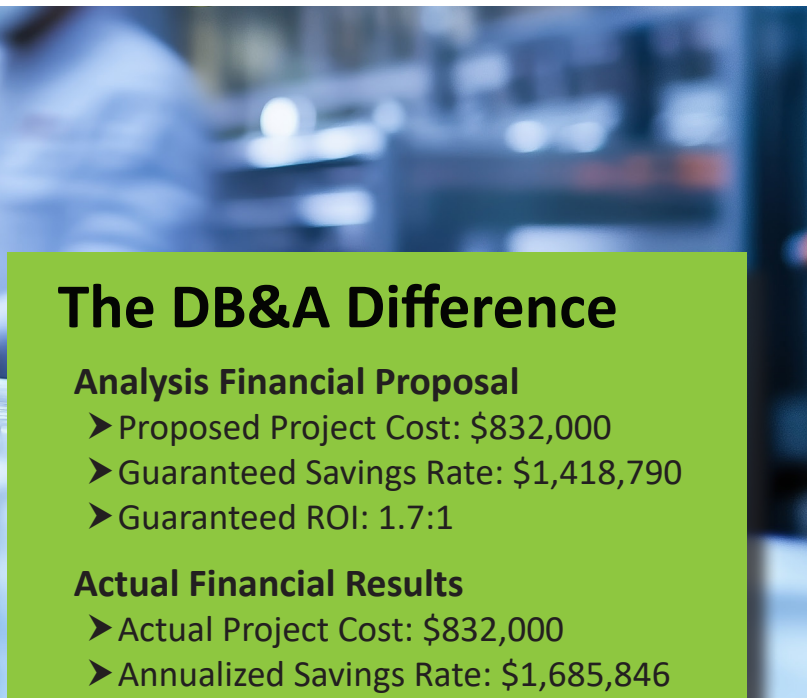


Recognizing the need for cultural transformation and stronger leadership capability, the company engaged DB&A to help unlock operational efficiency and empower its people to lead at every level, and position their workforce for growth.

Analysis

DB&A began the engagement with a two-week intensive analysis to evaluate operational practices, leadership behaviors, and organizational effectiveness. The process involved direct observation of front-line activities, data reviews, and in-depth discussions with leaders across all levels. While the company had a solid foundation and a history of success, the analysis revealed several critical gaps that were limiting performance and threatening future scalability.

One of the most prominent issues was the lack of consistent supervisory engagement. Front-line leaders were deeply task-oriented — often focusing on executing work themselves rather than overseeing team performance or driving results. This “doer”



The DB&A Difference

Analysis Financial Proposal

- Proposed Project Cost: \$832,000
- Guaranteed Savings Rate: \$1,418,790
- Guaranteed ROI: 1.7:1

Actual Financial Results

- Actual Project Cost: \$832,000
- Annualized Savings Rate: \$1,685,846
- ROI: 2.1:1

Project Results

- Reduced labor hours to execute schedule by 17%
- Direct labor efficiency improved by 11%
- 23% increase in schedule execution and on-time delivery

mindset, while rooted in commitment and a desire to help, ultimately constrained productivity and created leadership bottlenecks. Supervisors were not consistently holding their teams accountable or coaching employees to improve, which weakened the overall management structure.

The analysis also uncovered a reactive approach to problem-solving. Instead of anticipating issues or guiding teams through challenges, supervisors frequently stepped in to complete tasks directly, especially during periods of stress or transition. This reactionary style

not only pulled supervisors away from their core leadership responsibilities but also limited the growth and independence of team members. As a result, root causes were often left unaddressed, leading to recurring issues and inefficiencies.

Communication breakdowns further complicated daily operations. There was minimal structure in place to support effective communication across shifts and departments, leading to information silos and a lack of continuity. Missed messages, unclear expectations, and inconsistent handoffs caused delays and eroded efficiency. Teams were often unaware of the priorities, challenges, or performance outcomes of previous shifts, which disrupted operational flow and hindered collaboration.

In addition, the organization was sitting on valuable performance data, but not using it. While reports were being generated, they weren't leveraged to identify trends, solve problems, or make informed decisions. Supervisors lacked training in interpreting data and translating it into action, which meant performance issues went unnoticed or unresolved until they escalated.

Finally, the analysis highlighted significant inefficiencies during shift transitions and equipment changeovers. These moments, which should have been tightly managed to maintain productivity, were frequently disorganized and unplanned. The absence of clear processes or cross-functional coordination led to unproductive machine downtime, compounding delays and frustrating staff.

Through this detailed analysis, it became clear to both DB&A and the client's leadership team that operational improvements alone would not be enough. Real transformation would require a shift in mindset — empowering supervisors to lead effectively, driving accountability at all levels, and creating a culture rooted in performance, communication, and continuous improvement.

Implementation Actions

Following the initial analysis, DB&A and the client aligned on a clear path forward—one focused on building leadership capability, strengthening operational discipline, and creating the infrastructure necessary for sustained performance improvement. The implementation phase began with defining and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of front-line leaders. This foundational step established clear accountability and expectations, ensuring supervisors were no longer just task executors, they were performance drivers for their teams.

To support this shift, DB&A introduced time-based performance standards that allowed leaders to measure



optimal, actual, and target outcomes in real time. These standards brought transparency to daily operations and equipped teams with a shared understanding of what success looked like. Supervisors began to actively monitor performance metrics, quickly identifying gaps and taking corrective action. With this visibility, teams could manage with greater focus and consistency, reducing variability and improving throughput.

A structured cadence of daily and weekly meetings were implemented to foster alignment, drive communication, and enable rapid issue resolution. These touchpoints created new forums for accountability and empowered supervisors to escalate issues, share insights, and collaboratively problem-solve. Cross-functional participation ensured that operational decisions considered the broader impact on production, maintenance, and support functions, strengthening collaboration and reducing delays.

One-on-one coaching became a central element of the engagement. DB&A consultants worked directly with supervisors to model effective leadership behaviors and provide immediate, practical feedback. This hands-on development helped supervisors build confidence, shift their mindset, and grow into their roles as proactive leaders. Over time, the coaching sessions instilled new habits — prioritizing people management, data interpretation, and strategic thinking over hands-on execution.

To enable data-driven decision-making, DB&A implemented structured reporting systems that tracked productivity, identified performance variances, and supported root cause analysis. Supervisors were trained to read and interpret these reports, recognize real-time issues, and take ownership of performance outcomes. Rather than reacting after the fact, leaders began managing proactively — preventing problems before they disrupted workflow.

Finally, targeted improvements were made to critical transition points in the operation. Shift handoffs and equipment changeovers were redesigned using standardized practices and “hot handoffs” to ensure continuity and reduce downtime. DB&A facilitated cross-functional planning between operations and maintenance teams to better coordinate changeovers and eliminate unnecessary interruptions. These operational enhancements, combined with stronger leadership, brought discipline, predictability, and momentum to the production floor.

Project Results

The transformation that unfolded was nothing short of remarkable. What began as an engagement to strengthen supervisory skills evolved into a company-wide cultural shift—one grounded in leadership, accountability, and operational excellence. Front-line supervisors who once focused solely on task execution emerged as confident leaders, fully owning their team’s performance and proactively driving results.



Production became more consistent and predictable, with streamlined workflows and fewer disruptions. Shift transitions, once a source of confusion and delay, now operated with clarity and precision—thanks to standardized handoffs and enhanced communication. Teams worked with greater cohesion, aligned around shared goals and empowered by real-time performance insights.

One of the most significant changes was the adoption of a data-driven mindset. Supervisors embraced structured reporting tools, leveraging data to identify trends, correct variances, and manage with intention. This shift not only improved decision-making on the floor but also reinforced a sense of ownership and accountability across all levels of leadership.

“This engagement provided our team with the structure, discipline, tools, and confidence to effectively lead their departments. Our leaders are taking initiative, making informed decisions, and driving continuous improvements,” said the Director of Operations. “It has resulted in a complete cultural transformation, and the progress is truly exciting.”

Additionally, the implementation of strategic operational enhancements led to measurable performance gains. Indirect labor hours needed to execute the schedule were reduced by 17%, allowing support teams to operate more efficiently and focus on higher-value activities. Direct labor efficiency improved by 11% through better task alignment and streamlined processes. These improvements contributed to a 23% increase in schedule execution and on-time delivery—enhancing the company’s reliability and strengthening its position in a competitive market.

The financial outcomes validated the depth of the transformation. Backed by a performance guarantee of \$1,418,790 and an engagement cost of \$832,000, the project was designed to deliver a strong return. It exceeded even those high expectations: verified savings reached \$1,685,846, resulting in a realized ROI of 2:1. The results not only fulfilled the performance guarantee—they surpassed it, affirming the lasting value of the investment.

With new systems, empowered leadership, and a high-performance culture firmly in place, the client is now better positioned to deliver on its commitments and lead confidently into the future—stronger, smarter, and more resilient than ever before.

Since 1987 DB&A has provided cross-industry management consulting delivering 15-20% in operational and financial improvements to our clients with a financial guarantee. We deliver customized solutions that maximize existing resources to increase efficiency, capacity, and productivity. Our approach is to work with all levels of management to transform management culture in order to drive accountability where it matters most: the front-lines. For more information visit www.dbaresults.com or email contact@dbaresults.com