



Aviation Industry Case Study

West Star Aviation is an aircraft repair, maintenance, and refurbishing company with ten locations across the USA. Their Grand Junction, Colorado facility was experiencing less than satisfactory productivity, excessive rework, and excessive labor costs to meet customer deadlines.

Norwest Equity Partners, who previously worked with DB&A, recommended DB&A to West Star as a resource to help drive cost reductions across the board.



The DB&A Difference

Analysis Financial Proposal

- Proposed Project Cost: \$1,298,000
- Guaranteed Savings Rate: \$2,900,000
- Guaranteed ROI: 2.3:1

Actual Financial Results

- Actual Project Cost: \$1,298,000
- Annualized Savings Rate: \$5,600,000
- ROI: 4.3:1

Project Results

- Increased Effective Labor Rate by 17.4%
- Established Accountability Metrics
- Empowered Individual Ownership
- Increased Active Supervising by 28%

DB&A Analysis

Our Analysis Team conducted work studies with the West Star management team over two weeks. The goal was to identify the barriers impacting the amount of rework and to improve the effective labor rate.

We observed:

- Existing processes
- Equipment and materials utilization
- Business culture
- Service inefficiency
- Quality shortfalls



Our initial analysis discovered that front-line supervisors did not engage in proactive leadership, creating a culture where employees were left alone to make decisions about planning, scheduling, and production. Tools for work assignment and follow-up did not exist within the facility's management operating system.

Managers and team leaders spent only 6% of their day actively supervising hourly employees, but spent 43% of their day performing administrative tasks. Team members were spending significant amounts of time searching for equipment, parts, and performing repeat work. As a result, they were experiencing less than satisfactory performance, excessive rework, and high labor costs.

Project Scope

The initial phase of the project was coaching team leaders on how to clearly define roles and responsibilities, establish effective communication tools, and execute realistic expectations.

Improving communication was one of the main focuses of the project. Managers and team leaders participated in leadership workshops emphasizing data driven actions and decisions.

To close gaps in the existing management operating system, we worked with local leadership to create and implement actionable management tools designed to help managers establish hourly key performance indicators, holding team members accountable to new expectations.

Tools implemented included daily team huddles and WorkSite, a daily operations management solution that tracks individual performance in order to increase accountability. These tools allowed managers to collect and analyze data regarding their respective team's production and performance and be proactive about addressing problems.

“It's nice to see that what we are doing is making an impact and influencing the company as a whole in a positive direction.”

– **Jeremy Ficklin**
Aircraft Services Program
Manager

“There is more interaction between [supervisors] and the employees. Not just the ones that struggle, but all employees.”

– **Steve Smith**
Challenger Team Leader

Implementation Results

“Since we implemented the [management operating system], we have the ability to track where we are and know upfront how much revenue we have for a project.”

– **John Callahan**
Aircraft Services Detail Lead

At the start of the project, DB&A guaranteed West Star Aviation a 2.3:1 return on investment (ROI) and annualized savings rate of \$2.9 million.

By the end of the project, the ROI was 4.3:1 and the annualized savings rate equaled \$5.6 million. Our consultants were able to accomplish these results by increasing the effective labor rate by 17.4% over the course of the project. Management reduced the time they spent performing administrative tasks and increased the amount of time they spent actively supervising from 6% to 34%.

After a successful engagement with DB&A, West Star Aviation can now depend on the Grand Junction facility to produce quality results and use the most efficient allocation of resources.

“At first, I thought this was a waste of time but a lot of good came out of it.”

– **Sean McGregor**
Gulfstream/Learjet Team Leader

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.dbareresults.com or email contact@dbareresults.com