

Continuous Improvement Success Story: Cremator Operator

Title: From Overwhelmed to Operational Hero

How Chris Delivered a 52-Minute Time Saving and Boosted Value Efficiency

Background:

Chris is a Cremator Operator. Without formal education in process improvement, Chris brought an exceptional mindset to the table: curiosity, initiative, and care for his team. Faced with a frustrating and inconsistent internal task, Chris took ownership, investigated root causes, and led the change.

The Problem:

Staff were spending excessive time each day delivering cremated remains for collection. The process was repetitive, inefficient, and prone to delays in completing a critical data task in the client management system. The team faced:

- Long and variable lead times (up to 3.5 hours)
- Manual double-handling of appointment lists
- Poor lighting and overcrowding in the Cremated Remains storage room
- Delays of up to 20 minutes in task completion due to return trips and distractions

Current State:

- Total Median Process Time: 120 minutes
- Value Quotient: 57%
- Task completed only after returning to the office

Future State (Implemented March 2025):

- Chris introduced real-time task completion using a laptop at the point of delivery
- Eliminated the need to return to the office
- Improved traceability and reduced missed updates

Results:

- Process Time Reduced by 52 minutes
- New Median Process Time: 68 minutes
- Value Quotient Increased from 57% to 69%
- Significant time saving for staff, improving daily workflow and reducing interruptions
- Enabled real-time information visibility via CemSys

Quote from Leadership:

“Chris didn’t wait to be told how to fix the problem. He saw a gap, involved his team, tested a new way, and proved it worked. That’s what a continuous improvement culture looks like in action.”

Why This Matters:

This is more than a 52-minute time saving. It's a story of capability and confidence. It proves that when frontline team members are empowered, they solve problems others miss. Chris is now seen as a CI leader and mentor to others in the operations team.

What's Next:

- Expansion of the new delivery model across funeral services
- Chris to share his story at the next CI Showcase
- Further enhancements to reduce location time using visual controls