

### Statement of the Issue

To provide advice to, and give input to, the internal project team given the brief to design a new packing line to increase production targets.

A leading biscuit manufacturer wished to improve productivity and determined to invest in a new packing conveyor line as an integral part of achieving their goal. The local management team was required to increase productivity over the following 12 months. There was concern because there was historically a high accident rate and high staff turnover.



### Solution

Hu-Tech were called in to assist the project team which was set up. An initial ergonomics assessment identified that there was potential for upper limb disorders with the existing arrangements. New ways of working were recommended and subsequently integrated into the new line.

The project team identified the key design and operational issues which had to be tackled if the production goal was to be met. These included the orientation of the packing conveyor to the operators, the biscuit containers being too far away causing reaching and stretching, as well as the operators having to stand for long periods causing discomfort and fatigue.

Hu-Tech proposed a number of design solutions to address the issues and provided dimensional criteria

for the design. An adjustable workstation was built as a mock up and staff were consulted so that the final design incorporated their preferences.

### Significant outcomes

The result included:

- Increased productivity (output up 33% with 25% more operatives)
- Fewer health problems reported (upper limb disorder complaints down 48%; complaints of dizziness down 26%)
- Improved product quality, reduced labour turnover and a reduction in sickness absence.

The pay-back period was well inside three years and overall costs were reduced by fewer claims for compensation. The Company recognised that the investment in good ergonomic design was the single most important factor in this achievement.

***“The essence of the success of this project has been in the application of proper ergonomics principles allied to good manufacturing and personnel practices...”***

*Factory General Manager*

For information visit [www.hu-tech.co.uk](http://www.hu-tech.co.uk) or email: [info@hu-tech.co.uk](mailto:info@hu-tech.co.uk)

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