Exel/ The Home Depot RDC Safety Project

Overview
Exel is a third party logistics provider for The Home Depot. Their Breinigsville RDC (Rapid Deployment Center, similar to a cross-dock), had over 52 OSHA recordable safety incidents during 2012. The team was given the task of analyzing the facility and finding ways to improve the overall safety, efficiency, and productivity.

Objectives
The team’s main objective was to reduce the number of OSHA recordable safety incidents by 50%. In addition to reducing safety incidents, a sub-goal was to find a way to change the work climate to reflect a more safety oriented mindset.

Approach
- The team took several trips the RDC
- While on the site visits, the team spoke with numerous associates, floor managers, and supervisors
- In addition, the team took measurements of the facility while on the site visits.
- Since the project scope was relatively undefined, the team spent a long time narrowing down its goals
- The team requested data from the sponsors about the type and number of injuries by department
- The current data and proposed solutions were verified and validates using the computer program Design Tools
- CAD models were created of an improved step stool and large pallet used for transporting water heaters (the "yacht").
- A rapid prototype of the "yacht" was made.
- After the new data from the proposed solutions was put into design tools, the team estimated a reduction in injuries by about 42% in some departments.

Outcomes
- Reduction in the number of injuries on the inbound side of the facility by at least 11 per year.
- Reduction in the number of injuries on the outbound side of the facility by at least 7 per year.
- 45% NIOSH lifting guidelines improvement
- Injury reduction in total, based on the average cost of worker compensation provided by Exel, could save the company $174,299.30 annually.