

Created in 1996, Zoolab has become the UK's number one animal handling experience company, working in the education and care sector, as well as recently branching out into the corporate and events sector. With a national network of rangers and an 'animal team' on hand, Zoolab helps schools, nurseries, care homes, corporate organisations and such to bring people closer to nature, stimulating an interest in science whilst helping to deliver their key messages and/ or learning goals.



### Business Improvement Academy Project

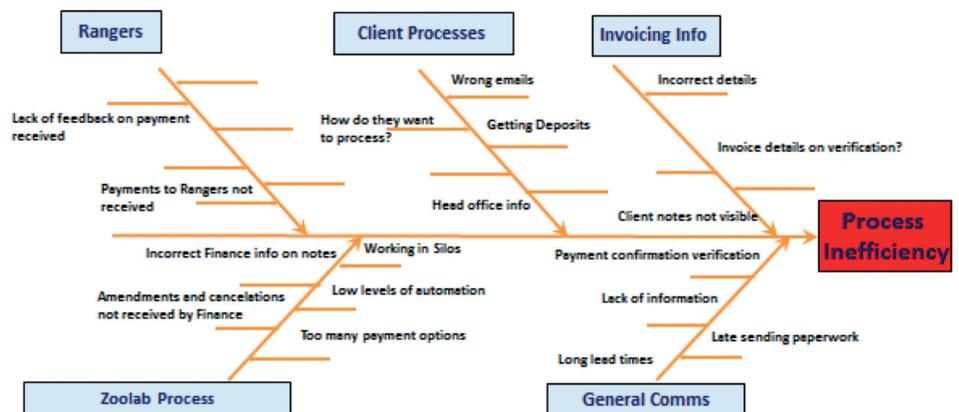
Jacqueline Gardner (Finance Assistant), Judith Kendall (Finance Manager), Karen Rutherford (HR Assistant / PA to Directors) took part in the Academy programme with the objective of improving the flow of work from **Sales through to cash collection**. Previous projects had focussed on front end processing so the timing was now good to concentrate on linkage of activities through to payment of invoices.

### Project Analysis

As the company was now established in its new modern open plan facility the team wanted to map out end to end processes and display the value stream within the office for all to be engaged with. This commenced with the team creating a **"Brown Paper" map** from incoming Sales, through Finance, Administration, Ranger

activity and Debt collection. As the map was displayed on the wall in the office all staff were encouraged to add comments and highlight inefficiency as part of the company **"Waste Walk"**. The team were then able to create an **Ishikawa diagram** for the complete Order fulfilment Process:

### ORDER FULFILMENT PROCESS - Fishbone



This led to the introduction of new measures relating to improvement and the development of action plans as shown below:

- Automated CRM to integrate Sales with Finance
- Email verification by Sales team
- Payment terms verification by Sales team
- Training to Sales team on the impact of late payments
- Amendments and cancellations reported to Finance
- IT team given projects by Finance
- Streamline payment options
- Improve the culture of data recording

The team developed a traffic light system to measure progress of the above actions and to focus the wider office on the quality of Ranger Sales leading to efficient cash collection and improved customer service.

### Business Benefits

The benefit to the business is that there is now a **streamlined process** which is efficient and saves the company time and resources. All payments are now collected at head office - the Rangers are no longer collecting cash on site as this was proving to be very protracted with the added costs of chasing, postage and missed payments. The business enjoyed a positive **£20k** upfront injection in cash-flow with savings projected to be approx. **£1k per month** going forward.

Overall the team are now better placed to look at their processes and make sure that they are not wasting or duplicating the work throughout. New training is being developed across all aspects of company roles.

In addition Zoolab is now hosting "**Best Practice Visits**" for the SE Improvement Academy with members of staff presenting their Lean journey to other companies.

[www.zoolabuk.com](http://www.zoolabuk.com)

*"The BIA programme was very enjoyable at it really demonstrates how we don't apply common sense in the workplace until we take a step back, look at what we do, learn from others, and build confidence in people to change"*

*Judith Kendall, Finance Manager*