



Case Study:

Champion

Industry: Paper Production

- Company: [Champion Paper](#)
- Situation: The Champion pulp mill in Hinton, AB produced specialty high-brightness sheet pulp for use in producing high-quality printing paper. The pulp machines at the end of the production process, which produced sheet pulp for shipping to customers, were experiencing unpredictable reliability leading to uneven production vs. plan. Additionally, planned maintenance outages in the different parts of the mill were running over schedule, causing upstream and downstream impacts to production.
- Role: Lead Consultant
- Analysis: A review of the historical performance of the pulp machines was conducted, along with a review of the maintenance outages in all mill areas over the previous year.
- Findings: The review of the pulp machines showed a series of unplanned breakdowns that caused the rest of the mill to curtail production. It was also determined that the training level of the crews in the pulp machine area was very inconsistent, including the supervision. The area manager was new to the position and was overwhelmed with reacting to the unplanned breakdowns. The maintenance outage review showed that each area of the mill planned and scheduled their outages in a vacuum with little coordination with the other areas. When the upstream areas were forced to curtail, they would cherry pick some of the outage maintenance jobs, thereby disrupting the coming planned outages.
- Solution and Result: The first focus was to stabilize the performance of the pulp machines. This was accomplished by prioritizing the repeat breakdown issues for root cause resolution by mill maintenance and engineering resources. Additional operator and supervisory training was conducted, utilizing the senior management members of the mill who had come up through the ranks. Scheduled outages were limited to Predictive and preventive maintenance only. A cross-mill team was formed to plan and coordinate scheduled outages in each area. A “ready list” of maintenance work was created for each area to use during any future curtailments. The result was significantly more consistent performance from the pulp machines, including an entire month with no unplanned outages, which had never happened before. Overall mill production increased by over 10% and the number of unplanned breakdowns in all areas dropped due to better coordination and execution of their planned maintenance outages.