



Embedded Director of Operations

Bringing Daily Control, Leadership Structure, and Execution Discipline Inside the Client Team

Challenge

A growing manufacturer had strong people and clear ambitions, but lacked the management framework needed to translate goals into daily execution. People wore multiple hats, roles were unclear, escalations were informal, and recurring production issues stayed unresolved because no one owned a disciplined response loop.

Leadership did not need someone to simply keep the wheels on the bus. They needed an embedded operator who could step into the business, establish structure quickly, coach frontline leaders, and help the team turn what they needed to do into a workable system for how.

What We Did

Duggan Associates embedded an interim Director of Operations inside the client team to establish a practical operating system for daily management:



Installed a three-tier meeting cadence connecting frontline teams, production leadership, and plant support around the same daily priorities and 24-hour actions.



Built Leader Standard Work (LSW) for production and support roles so team leads understood what good looks like each day and week.



Facilitated problem-solving at the source by reframing vague discussions into clear problem statements, sequenced actions, and decisions the team could actually close.

"We design a customer delivery system that enables Operational Excellence, then transfer the capability so your team can run it daily."

Why it Worked

- Instead of adding more management pressure, the engagement created a repeatable system for communication, accountability, and decision-making. Daily issues became visible in the right forum, leaders were coached in role clarity and follow-through, and action items were framed to be completed within one business day rather than drifting into unresolved backlog.
- This is what an Embedded Director of Operations should do: not merely run the floor, but provide the structure and operating rhythm that helps a business get out of its own way. The value was in providing a framework and structure to what the client already had in place – rather than simply maintaining the status quo.

Implementation Highlights

- Tier Meeting System
 - Introduced Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 meetings spanning direct labour, team leads, plant leadership, and support functions.
 - Standardised discussion around people, equipment, material, schedule, escalations, maintenance, quality, and urgent actions.
- 24-Hour Accountability Loop
 - Whiteboard actions were limited to items that could be completed by the following business day.
 - Long-term issues were broken into immediate next steps, creating momentum and preventing drift.
- Leader Standard Work Rollout
 - Worked first with production leaders to define the behaviours, daily tasks, and weekly checks that make team leads effective.
 - Required weekly submission and review of standard work, with one-on-one coaching and training plans to close skill gaps.
- Structured Facilitation of Chronic Issues
 - Stepped into meetings that were stuck in debate, forced definition of the real problem, sequenced required actions, and helped teams close issues with follow-up decisions.
 - Began work on practical operational blockers including labour clocking logic, inventory control, and FIFO rules that did not match physical reality on the floor.

Results

- Leadership confidence and client trust built quickly. Within the first two weeks, client feedback was described as glowing, with direct praise for the pace, drive, and quality of the work.
- A daily operating rhythm was established. The plant moved from informal communication and reactive escalation toward a defined cadence with visible priorities and one-day action closure.
- Management capability was being built, not rented. Team leads and support functions began creating and using Leader Standard Work, with training plans and ongoing coaching designed to leave the client stronger after the engagement.

Contact Us

We believe we must earn our place by accomplishing results. We don't lock you into contracts. If you don't think we're delivering value, don't keep us as a partner.

Phone: +1 (401) 667-7299
Email: thealey@dugganinc.com
Website: www.dugganinc.com