

Turning Packing Department Claims into Workable Solutions



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Abstract

The Kawneer Company in Springdale, Arkansas is a façade aluminum manufacturer. The company had an escalating issue in receiving claims from customers due to bad packing. Its quality department was tasked in reducing claims in the packing department. The results proved that claims could be reduced with increased training and aids.

Introduction

The Kawneer Company in Springdale, Arkansas is a façade aluminum manufacturer. They produce aluminum curtainwall and storefront materials as well as doors. In several months, the quality department of Kawneer Company, an aluminum manufacturer located in Arkansas, had encountered several issues that involve claims from customers relating to the packing department that account for about \$41,000 of total claims in January and February.

Problem

Claims were sharply inclining over a several months time. It was important to reduce the added material re-work and money credited to the customer. The goals were set as:

- Reduce claims from customers by 10% in 60 days or less
- 10% or less of production staff with a score of 3 or lower
- Minimize human error by 5% from lack of training and other obstacles weekly

Methodology

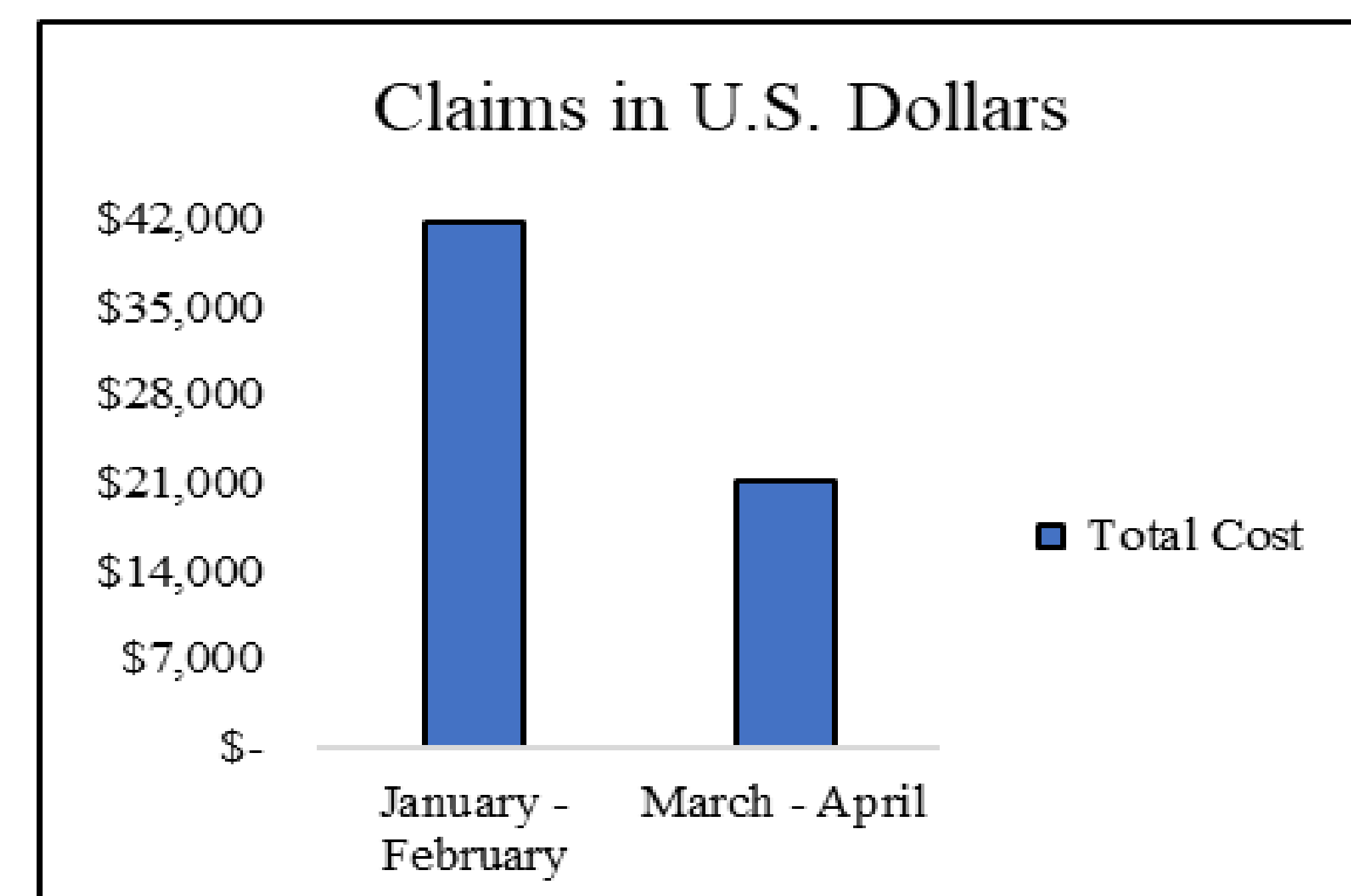
Data from the beginning of the year from January to February was compared to data acquired in March and April with the new implementation of training and accountability.

First, color samples were provided for easy distinguishing of different anodize finishes for the packing workers.

Second, intensified, and additional training was provided to packing workers. They were tested after work instructions were provided with a score that translated into a level of knowledge. Third action was additional auditing or GEMBA walks of the processes. This consisted of performing two audits per week. This also placed accountability on the group and helped minimize human error.

Results and Discussion

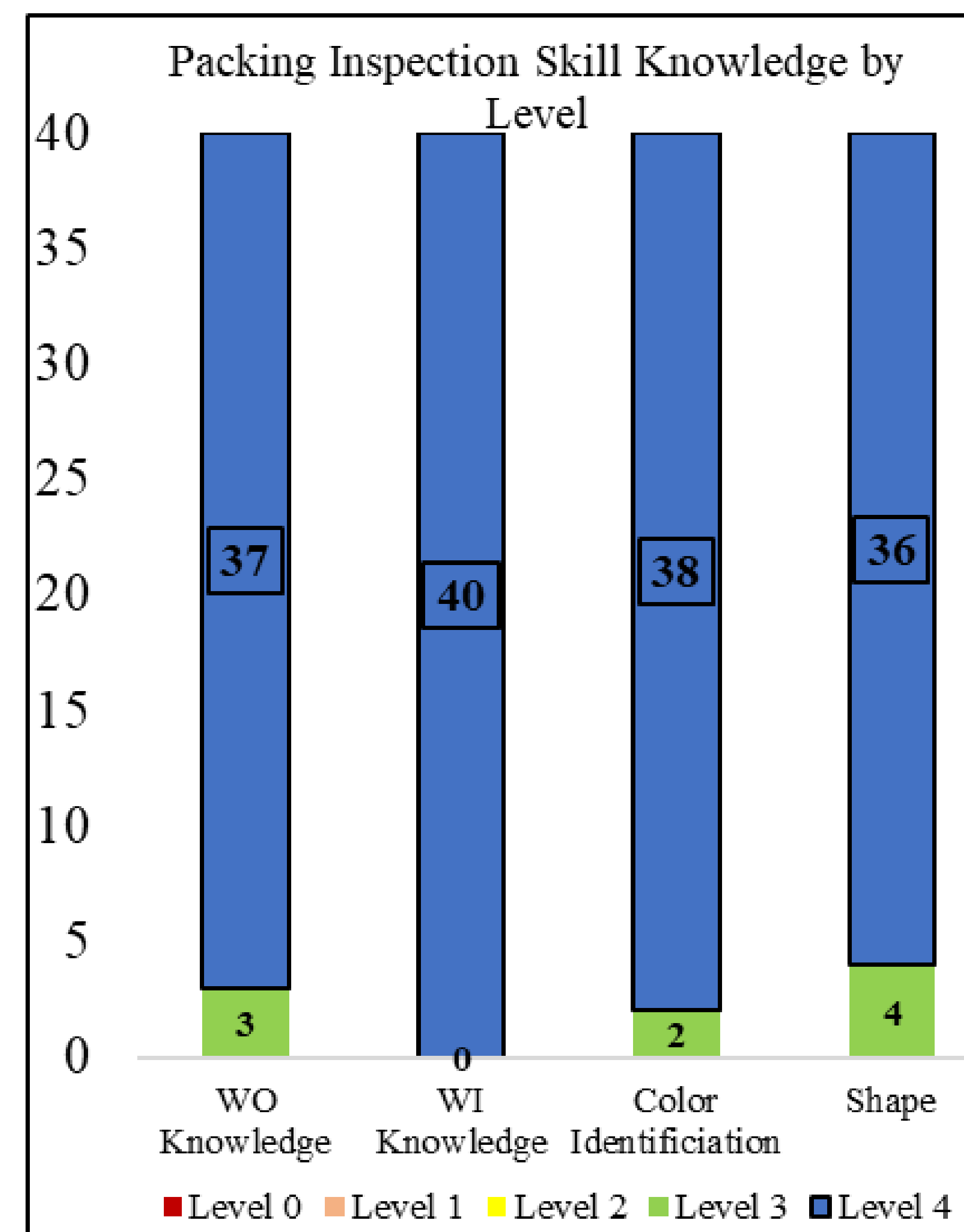
In the beginning of the year, the claims for packing skyrocketed. With the new processes and implementation for workers, claims began to slow down and for the past two weeks have stopped. The result was claims went from over \$41,000 to \$21,096 which was almost half of the amount.



Results and Discussion

This shows how the number of claims were just as impressive with 14 claims starting out in January and February and ended with only 9 in March and 1 in April. Based on the numbers, training, sample board, and GEMBA walks helped reduced claims.

All packing workers have been tested and with the claim's numbers, proves that this was successful. While the shape identification proved to be the largest obstacle, the goal was met in the scoring. Human error was the leading issue and was reduced to 5% with processes that proved to solve claims issues such as checking the color, and training with detailed work instructions on how to pack certain materials.



Conclusions

The primary objectives were to reduce claims received from customers, provide training to better the packing process, and reduce the error rate in order to provide a quality product that would save the company money with labor and costs to rework material. It was discovered that human error was largely to blame, and training was very badly needed. Color charts as seen below enabled workers to see what the piece should look like as well as shape identification which was also an issue. The simple processes that were placed proved to be not only helpful but cost effective as well.



Future Work

The packing department requires training, observation and engagement with the workers. GEMBA walks and audits will be ongoing to verify the workers knows what and why they are doing, what they are doing. New employees will unquestionably be hired and will need to be trained.

Acknowledgements

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