ACCELERANT
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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Case study

Transforming Operations Excellence in Chemicals Manufacturing

Industry

> Chemicals

Services

> Operational Strategy & Transformation
> Organizational Transformation

Business Challenge

Croda International is a UK-based specialty chemicals business and a global leader serving consumer, life sciences, and industrial markets. To support sustained growth, Croda launched a wider transformation program to strengthen efficiency, consistency, and operational capability across its global manufacturing network.

Manufacturing sites had developed strong local ways of working. The opportunity was to connect this expertise, share good practice more consistently, and establish a common Operations Excellence framework across Europe, Asia, North America, and Latin America.

Croda selected Accelerant for its experience in transformation programs and its ability to work in partnership with site teams throughout analysis and implementation.

The objective was not to impose a single external solution, but to create a practical Operations Excellence approach grounded in local expertise. Croda teams needed to be able to own the model, sustain the new ways of working, and scale them across the manufacturing network.

The partnership combined lighthouse projects, detailed operational reviews, hands-on implementation, on-site coaching, and central program management. It was designed to deliver measurable improvement while building the internal capability and ownership needed for continuous improvement.

Process

Accelerant and Croda used a partnership-led, phased approach that combined objective analysis with practical implementation. Lighthouse sites were selected to pilot the model, demonstrate improvement, and build internal capability before the approach was extended to additional sites. Multi-purpose sites were chosen in each region where clear opportunities existed and teams had sufficient capacity to support sustained change.

At each site, detailed reviews identified opportunities, constraints, and practical priorities across production losses, maintenance effectiveness, planning and scheduling, organization structure, and indirect spend. Findings also informed updates to regional operational strategies and related transformation work.

The approach was built around three connected elements:

> Analysis and planning
> Site implementation
> Capability and Program Management

Sites agreed operational and financial improvement targets that were incorporated into budgets. Deliverables and measurable targets were defined jointly for each workstream, creating ownership from the outset.

Accelerant provided practical on-site coaching and implementation support alongside local teams. This support transferred knowledge, strengthened ownership, and helped embed new ways of working while delivering measurable results.

What our customers say

"The consultants from Accelerant helped us build momentum for change through a practical, partnership-led approach."

Kal Khogali, Group SHE & Operations Excellence Director

"Accelerant's input on our site was effective, efficient, and value adding. They worked well with the team, provided training as required, tools, and direction with an OpEx mindset. They were flexible in their approach and provided a conclusive service from beginning to end."

Kim Carmichael, Site Director

Working in partnership with Croda teams, a central Operations Excellence team supported the program with a Playbook, Maturity Assessment, digital dashboards, online training, program governance, and a coach-the-coach approach. A review of the global manufacturing footprint and regional operational strategies identified further opportunities to reduce costs and accelerate improvements.

Operational Strategy & Transformation

Lighthouse sites provided a practical setting to test the Operations Excellence approach, build internal capability, and demonstrate improvement. Multi-purpose sites were chosen in each region based on clear opportunities and sufficient capacity to sustain change.

- Lighthouse site selection
- Operational performance reviews
- Production loss analysis
- Maintenance effectiveness
- Planning and scheduling
- Organization and indirect spend

The analysis enabled local leadership teams to set practical improvement priorities and refresh regional operational strategies.

Site Implementation

Each site translated the analysis into jointly defined workstreams, project deliverables, and measurable operational and financial targets. The targets were incorporated into site budgets, connecting the improvement work with accountable delivery.

This joint design created ownership from the outset and kept each workstream focused on results that mattered to the site.

- Joint workstream design
- Operational improvement targets
- Financial targets in site budgets
- Practical on-site coaching
- Knowledge transfer
- Local ownership

Four lighthouse projects were completed in Europe, Asia, and North America. Three additional sites completed shorter projects with Accelerant support to launch Operations Excellence and provide an initial boost to performance. Alongside the local teams, Accelerant provided hands-on coaching and implementation support to transfer knowledge, strengthen ownership, and embed the new systems in day-to-day work.

Capability and Program Management

With Accelerant's support, a central team built the Operations Excellence program and the common infrastructure needed to sustain and scale improvement while retaining local ownership. Building on the lighthouse work, Croda then developed a field-and-forum training approach that helped smaller sites adopt new ways of working through focused four-week sprints.

- Operations Excellence Playbook
- Maturity Assessment
- Digital dashboards
- Online training resources
- Coach-the-coach approach
- Best-practice networks

Program governance gave the team visibility of progress and helped maintain momentum. Best-practice networks connected practitioners across sites so they could share know-how, templates, examples, success stories, and develop common tools. Together with coaching, online training, and a coach-the-coach model, this created a foundation for continuous improvement beyond the initial projects. Across 12 manufacturing sites, the program identified opportunities to improve performance and reduce costs. Implementation put sites on a path toward these benefits, including additional production capacity through improved production efficiency and optimized changeovers, as well as meaningful Safety, Health and Environment benefits through more sustainable, reliable, and safer ways of working.

"The Accelerant team helped sites objectively assess their current ways of working and coached teams to design future-fit systems that were practical, sustainable, and owned by the site."

Sam Edwards, Global Operations Excellence Implementation Lead

The program delivered measurable improvements and established a foundation for sustained Operations Excellence

- 4 lighthouse projects completed
- 3 additional sites supported
- Opportunities identified across 12 manufacturing sites
- Clear path toward performance and cost benefits
- Additional production capacity
- Improved production efficiency
- Optimized changeovers
- Operations Excellence Playbook and Maturity Assessment
- Training, coaching, forums, and governance
- Meaningful Safety, Health and Environment benefits