

Customer delays reduced by 40%



Keeping London moving: transforming performance in a highly pressured operational environment, with the world looking on.

Summary

Tube Lines maintains and improves the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines – 41% of the London Underground network. Facing intense pressure to improve efficiency, and with the full glare of public scrutiny on London's transport system in the lead up to the London Olympics, Tube Lines engaged Boxwood to help.

The challenge was to transform the business from operating in silos to focusing on organisation-wide goals. It was the biggest organisational challenge Tube Lines had ever faced. Getting it wrong carried significant risks for the entire network; instead, Tube Lines and Boxwood got it right. The project has helped transform the London Underground.

“Boxwood was prepared to get their hands dirty and really make things happen, Their ability to relate to our people at all levels meant they quickly built up a high level of credibility. Boxwood was instrumental in creating a culture that allowed us to make the changes we needed to make and do more with less.”

Lee Jones, Director of Operations

What we found

Despite a successful track record of safety and reliability, Tube Lines needed to make radical changes in response to a funding shortfall for planned maintenance and upgrades. They were under intense pressure to improve efficiency and had to achieve more with much less.

With the London 2012 Olympic Games also just around the corner, the challenge was to deliver this change and ensure the lines could cope with the massive increase in passenger numbers, despite having significantly less time for maintenance during the Games period.

At the same time, Tube Lines needed to find ways of achieving more in the short four-hour safe window they had each night to work on the tracks.

What we did

We worked with the crews out on the tracks and found that of the four-hour window, on average only two hours was actually spent working on the tracks. We redesigned processes to make sure the right skills and resources were allocated for the right jobs and that work was better coordinated between different teams.

We worked alongside the Tube Lines team to help them develop the detailed planning required to succeed with large and complex projects. We also challenged and supported Tube Lines staff to take more ownership in driving the necessary changes in behavior.

What we achieved

Utilisation of the safe working window increased by 30%, which meant Tube Lines could achieve 30% more in the same time every night. Also, customer delays reduced by 24%, meaning faster journeys and less disruption for passengers.

During the Olympics, Tube Lines achieved 25 delay-free days despite passenger levels increasing by a third. The Jubilee line operated so reliably it became the transport of choice to the stadium for athletes as well as spectators.

The transformation created a sustainable platform for ongoing improvements. Today, Tube Lines' performance is better and more cost-effective than it has ever been.