Program Validation and "Making it Stick"

Coaching and observing will be a key component in making sure the process is executed correctly. "Making it stick" after implementing a change is imperative to the success of the ongoing process. The Fast Flow process can be validated by utilizing the tools on the following pages. Once the process can be validated to completion, it should be routinely validated, to ensure everything stays on track and efficiency is maximized.

How will you make sure the program sticks?

- Train all Associates utilizing best practices
- Observe and coach in the moment, to guide and recognize Associate performance
- Use the tracking tools to monitor processing and flowing of goods, as needed
- Celebrate improvements and recognize Associates with S.O.A.R cards
- Make it fun! Create contests for the best CPH, flowing goods to the floor, or the best feature. Having fun and keeping your Associates engaged will drive great results

Validation Instructions:

To ensure store teams are set for success in the backroom, it is necessary to validate the Fast Flow process from start to finish. It is important that each area is assessed and only validated to completion. If an area cannot yet be validated, it should be addressed and fixed immediately.

Fast Flow Validation should be conducted first as a store self-assessment, with the Operations ASM and Store Manager, and after successful self-validation, the Store Manager must validate the process in partnership with their District Manager. The Fast Flow SOP should be used to aid the validation process to ensure setup and flow are set to standard / reset as needed.

Print the following validation pages and utilize the space between each validation point to make note of areas to recognize or improve. Do not check off a validation point until it is to standard. Completed validation pages should be retained for 6 months in the filing cabinet by the backroom computer.

Areas to validate:
- Backroom Layout and Equipment
- Truck Team – roles and responsibilities
- Leadership Team – roles and responsibilities
- Receiving and Productivity Tracking
- Flowing Merchandise

1. Backroom Layout & Equipment

- Backroom layout flows from pallet processing toward the sales floor

- Pallets are staged in the most efficient area, furthest from sales floor

- Operations board layout is correct and up to date

- Size IDs, hangers, and EAS tags, are full and set to SOP

- Trash cans are properly staged near Associates, without having to take too many steps (ARRC recycling stores will need an additional bag or trash can for plastic)

- Dollies, totes, and category signs are being utilized appropriately (totes with merchandise should have dollies underneath for easy movement)

- Tanks are being used for bulk hardlines merchandise

- Laundry bins are being utilized for lightweight gear, travel, home, and pet

- Totes that are used most frequently are closest to the Associate

- Z-racks are within arms-reach of the apparel processor

- Backroom starts and ends clean, organized, and ready for the next truck

2. Truck Team

- Associates are scheduled appropriately (ideally, at 7am with team of 4, with Associates also scheduled to flow merchandise)

- The Pace Setter removes cartons from the pallet, quickly opens all flaps and sends them down the line to the bulk sorter, at a steady pace

- The Bulk Sorter places bulk items onto the correct equipment, breaks down cardboard when empty, and supports the next Associate as needed

- The Basic Sorter pulls out non-apparel items and places them into totes, and breaks down cardboard boxes when emptied

- The Apparel Processor, processes one garment at a time with appropriate hanger, size ID, and EAS tag, and batch hangs 5-6 pieces onto z-rack, sorted by gender

- The team understands and demonstrates proper EAS tagging of merchandise

- The team understands and demonstrates the role of each processing position (job aids posted to help Associates)

- Associates communicate breaks to team (prior to leaving station)

- Associates demonstrate an understanding of tracking their own processing times (communicating to BRC prior to end of shift)

- Team knows the Cartons Per Hour goal of 7.0 or higher

- Team displays a sense of urgency to process merchandise quickly and efficiently

3. Leadership Team

- The BRC creates a sense of urgency among the team

- The BRC understands and demonstrates when Associates should be flexed in the process (prevents bottlenecks)

- The BRC ensures supplies is restocked and communicates needs to MOD

- The BRC communicates when product is ready to flow to the sales floor

- The BRC takes ownership of the overall process, and is an easy to identify leader

- The BRC understands tracking efficiencies and fills out trackers appropriately and accurately

- The BRC / MOD spot check for proper EAS tagging

- The BRC / MOD course corrects with Associates as needed (for example, coaches an Associate promptly if they are utilizing the wrong hanger, taking too many steps, etc.)

- The MOD makes several passes through the backroom during the process

- The MOD communicates to the floor team when product is ready to flow

- The Management Team ensures that enough Associates are crossed-trained on Fast Flow in case of callouts

- The Management Team ensures / plans to have all coordinators trained to be able to lead the truck process, in absence of the BRC

4. Receiving STS Orders & Productivity Tracking

- o STS packages are individually scanned, labeled with Customer name and date received, and put away in alphabetical order in STS area

- o The BRC / MOD know when to communicate if there are any issues with STS packages

- o The BRC understands why productivity is tracked and can demonstrate how to track CPH correctly (without the aid of the tracker)

- o BRC / MOD utilize the Daily Store Delivery Log on The Summit and input information upon receipt of truck

- o BRC / MOD utilize the weekly productivity trackers located on The Summit to input CPH (used in conjunction with the store facing CPH calculator)

- o BRC / MOD can demonstrate how Associates utilize the merchandise flowing tracker

- o BRC / MOD can speak to Direct to Store SOP (seal verification process) and understand what to do with discrepancies

5. **Flowing Merchandise** (Follow the Flow Time Standards and Utilize Flowing Tracker)

Apparel and Accessories

- Z-racks are pushed when full and are separated by gender using a category paddle
- Z-racks are flowed to completion in 20 minutes or less
- Z-racks are promptly brought to the backroom when emptied
- Features and walls are prioritized, full and refreshed, keeping BFQP (brand, fashion, quality, price) top of mind

Hardlines

- Totes, tanks, and laundry bins are brought to the sales floor, accompanied by an Associate, when full
- End caps are prioritized and are filled and refreshed

Footwear

- Footwear tank is full, organized by gender and size
- End caps are prioritized, filled, and changed
- Size runs are filled in, flexed towards clearance

Queue Line

- Hopper totes are utilized for merchandise, separated by category
- Queue line merchandising plan is passed along to morning cashier who can fill and flex throughout their shift
- Merchandise is filled starting from the beginning of the Queue to the end, including POP (point of purchase) fixtures

Total Sales Floor

- One z-rack, stack of totes, tank, or laundry bin per Associate (for example: if two associates are flowing apparel, there can be two z-racks on the salesfloor)
- Associates are checking for proper EAS tagging prior to placing merchandise
- Signage is changed, as needed
- When open for business, fixtures / merchandise is mindfully placed, excess has been removed from the sales floor
- When open for business, customer service is top priority