

Case Study.
HMC Polymers.
Thailand.
Chemicals.

Project TRUST Drives Reliability Excellence at HMC Polymers

The leading producer and distributor of polypropylene resin in Asia, HMC Polymers serves customers around the globe. Driven to optimise assets' reliability and sustain operational excellence, the company launched an expansive transformation, including six cross-functional improvement initiatives designed to future-proof operations.

Before embarking on the initiatives, however, HMC Polymers identified a need to enhance ownership and engagement across the organisation. Thus, **Project TRUST** was born—a reliability culture and execution enablement program developed in partnership with dss⁺.

The meaning of TRUST

These five behaviours and values underpin the HMC Polymers cultural transformation:

Transparency in processes

Resilience to overcome challenges

Understanding of best practices

Standards that ensure reliability

Teamwork for continuous improvement

The Challenge

Despite clearly laid out initiatives and strong leadership commitment, several key challenges stood in the way of a successful transformation:

- Governance and decision making were limited by the reliability steering committee's limited involvement into initiatives
- Some teams struggled to distinguish between project and business as usual (BAU)—others were unaware of the global initiatives or how to contribute to reliability culture enhancement
- Overlaps and misalignment across initiatives led to duplicated efforts and inefficiencies
- The lack of a project identity and communication strategy reduced clarity around efforts and objectives

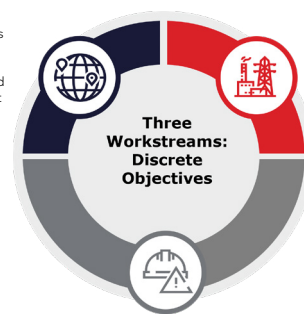


The dss⁺ Approach

dss⁺ and HMC Polymers identified three workstreams, each with distinct goals and deliverables, for driving cultural and operational alignment.

Governance

- Align objectives and roles across functions
- Ensure accountability, measurable progress and continuous improvement



Positioning and Communication

- Build a clear project identity, messaging framework, and communication strategy
- Recognize contributions and celebrate wins

Reliability Culture

- Embrace a Reliability Mission
- Embed behaviours through Felt Leadership, communication, and team champions

- 1. Governance:** Assure alignment of project objectives and roles across the six cross-functional teams. Strengthen governance structure, cadence, and discipline to ensure accountability, measurable progress, and continuous improvement.

2. Positioning and Communication: Establish an identity, messaging framework, and communication strategy that guides team members through change, from initial reluctance to commitment. Create recognition systems to acknowledge contributions and celebrate wins, and organise regular check-ins.

3. Reliability Culture: Embrace an organisation-wide Reliability Mission. Embed desired behaviours into daily work through Felt Leadership, clear communication, strong teamwork, and underscoring the link between actions and impact. Develop champions to lead by example.

Each workstream progressed along a three-phase process.

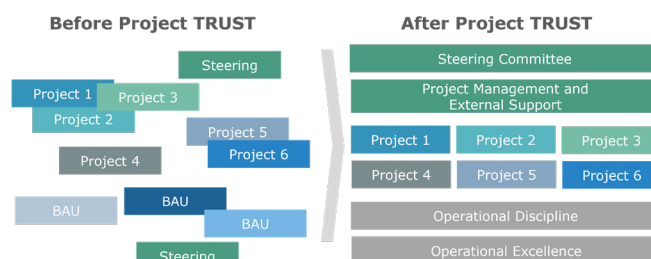
Phase 1: Discover and Diagnose

dss+ began by surveying HMC Polymers employees and teams, reviewing documentation, interviewing stakeholders, and observing meetings to uncover cultural, behavioural, and operational gaps. In addition, dss+ assessed the current governance structure, initiative charters, communication flows, and steering committee effectiveness.

Phase 2: Co-Design and Align

Three interactive workshops were held with more than 30 cross-functional leaders in order to co-create solutions and build alignment. Together, we addressed core challenges such as overlapping initiatives, limited oversight, and confusion between project and BAU work.

This led to an improved governance model, well-defined functional roles, and the establishment of a central project management team to coordinate all six initiatives. A new project dashboard allowed the steering committee to monitor and guide progress more efficiently.



At the close of phase two, we had achieved alignment on strategies to build the culture, foster cross-functional collaboration, and raise awareness for project aims and accomplishments.

Phase 3: Improve and Embed

Project TRUST continued to advance, thanks to an integrated project tracking dashboard, greater steering committee effectiveness and structured oversight, and continued culture-building. High-visibility efforts such as a Reliability Roadshow and **'My Role in Reliability'** activities promoted ownership at all levels.

In addition, daily felt leadership, recognition practices, and communication reinforcement helped ensure long-term adoption and internalisation of the HMC Polymers reliability transformation.





Impact

Project TRUST drove a step change in the HMC Polymers reliability story, resulting in significant improvements:

- Transformation initiatives became more focused, efficient, and outcome-driven, with reduced overlap and greater alignment to business priorities.
- The steering committee operates more effectively, with improved visibility, oversight, and decision-making cadence.
- The new governance structure and centralised project management established a repeatable model for future initiatives.
- A more proactive, accountable culture with felt leadership and peer recognition has become the status quo.
- The Reliability Mission and TRUST values underline the company's shared commitment and serve as anchors for decision making, leadership behaviour, and dynamic cross-functional collaboration.



Protect. Transform. Sustain.

Leadership Perspectives: Voices from HMC Polymers

'We build reliable operations through TRUST, take OWNERSHIP of performance, COLLABORATE across teams, and act PROACTIVELY to prevent failure.'

HMC Polymers Reliability Mission

'We aim to deliver on our commitments correctly, consistently, and on time. Reliability is a core principle that drives sustainable success for our business, our company, and our own future. Each of us can contribute by being proactive—looking ahead and planning systematically for reliability in every task. We cannot build trust with our customers, shareholders, or colleagues if we ourselves are not reliable.'

Vasun Subanake, Senior Vice President Manufacturing and Operational

'Behind every incident, there are human factors. In the end, it is about work processes, organisation and personal behaviours to ensure reliable equipment, performance and improvement. Project TRUST is built on recognising that we are the real drivers—the ones who can make changes. It is not about waiting for somebody else.'

Gianpiero Manca, Vice President Operational Excellence