The company operates in an industry that has over-capacity and is subject to intense global competition. Traditionally contracts have been awarded on the ability to fulfil detailed technical requirements as specified by the customer.

All projects are in some way unique, and this was no exception:

- The £40m contract represented a new type of customer, one that was not interested in the technical aspects of trains, rather the provision of a reliable mail delivery system
- The solution offered technical novelty with a ground breaking ‘bolt on cab’, and the potential for the mail trains to be converted into passenger trains if required
- With priorities of other projects there was a lack of experienced project team members
- Poor supplier relationships, built up from adverse supplier management
- Uncertain regulator activity (Railtrack)
- An historic average delivery record of 6 months overdue

As a result of these issues our client was forced to analyse the way they organised the project and engaged ABB to help.

**Solution**

ABB worked with the client at a number of levels to provide consultancy for this essential organisational change.

- One to one coaching with the project director
- Facilitation of the goal planning team workshops
- Facilitation of problem solving of emerging issues for example rail track approval and shop floor stage teams
- Running simulation exercises to create awareness of the importance of recognising implicit customer requirements
- Background training to create awareness and common language throughout the team as part of the induction of all project team members
- Project diagnosis at key stages of the projects

The client is a major producer of railway vehicles providing rolling stock for projects ranging between £20m and £300m.
Using the tools and ideas generated alongside ABB, the company was able to re-organise in the following ways:

- Development and implementation of Goal Directed Project Management (GDPM) and ‘milestone’ project control
- Development of Simultaneous Engineering (SE)
- Implementation of ‘best practice’
- Changing and improving the attitudes of the ‘critical mass’ of the project team
- Co-location of all individuals on the project team
- Development of mutually beneficial supplier relationships
- Feedback loop of quality problems to assembly
- ‘Freezing’ the design of the train at the end of each design phase
- Introduction of a more appropriate and fair bonus scheme for project teams and assembly workers

ABB were active at every stage of the project, supporting, challenging and facilitating sessions, especially where new tools and techniques were used for the first time.

Benefits
What were the results achieved?

- On time delivery - delivery of the first train in 14½ months, 2 weeks earlier than the original promise date (25 months best previously achieved)
- £1M reduction in material costs
- 5% profit on an original budget of break even
- Development of a dynamic project management process that was able to deal with major issues without an adverse affect on project milestones
- Reduction in design changes after assembly began, from 1000 to 200 saving costly retrofit programmes
- Staffing, throughput time and assembly time requirements were all met
- Winner of a Silver Supplier Award from the customer