

Operations and Production Director

Lignacite, a leading manufacturer in the construction materials sector, is seeking a highly experienced, hands-on **Operations and Production Director** to replace the outgoing director, Allan Eastwood. This pivotal senior management role requires a resilient and ambitious leader with a proven track record in heavy manufacturing and a clear path to future board-level contribution.

The Operations and Production Director at Lignacite will hold a critical role, ensuring seamless, safe, and innovative production across the Brandon and Nazeing sites. This hands-on position demands a high level of operational detail and strategic oversight across several critical functions:

1. Operational Management and Leadership Across Sites

- **Daily Site Oversight:** Provide highly visible, hands-on leadership and management across both manufacturing sites, ensuring all operations align with production schedules, quality standards, and budget targets.
- **Process Optimisation:** Continuously review, refine, and implement best-practice manufacturing and operational processes to maximise efficiency, reduce waste, and lower conversion costs while maintaining product quality.
- **Resource Management:** Effectively manage all operational resources, including capital equipment, plant assets, utilities, and labour planning, to meet fluctuating demand.
- **Performance Metrics:** Establish, monitor, and report on key operational performance indicators related to output, efficiency (OEE), cost, and quality.

2. Team Leadership and Development (2 Direct Reports, 40+ Indirect)

- **Direct Report Management:** Provide clear direction, coaching, and performance management for the two direct reports (e.g., Production Managers or Engineering Managers).
- **Cultural Leadership:** Lead by example to cultivate a positive, safety-first culture of accountability, continuous improvement, and teamwork across the entire workforce.
- **Talent and Skills:** Identify training needs, implement development programs, and ensure the team possesses the necessary skills to operate complex equipment and execute production plans effectively.
- **Industrial Relations:** Manage local employee and industrial relations, fostering open communication and constructive working relationships.

3. Innovation and Research & Development (R&D)

- **Product Development Integration:** Work closely with commercial and technical teams to manage the transition of new product innovations and mixes from R&D into full-scale, cost-effective production.
 - **Process Technology:** Identify and evaluate new manufacturing technologies and automation opportunities to improve output, reduce manual labour, and enhance safety.
 - **Continuous Improvement:** Champion a culture of CI to deliver incremental gains across all operational areas.
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4. Planning, Project Management, and Health & Safety

- **Production Planning:** Oversee the master production schedule, balancing raw material supply, capacity constraints, and sales demand to ensure OTIF (On-Time, In-Full) delivery to customers.
- **Capital Projects:** Lead the planning, budgeting, and execution of significant capital expenditure projects (e.g., plant upgrades, new machinery installations) from concept through to commissioning.
- **H&S Governance:** Serve as the functional leader for H&S, ensuring strict compliance with all regulatory requirements and implementing proactive measures to eliminate workplace hazards and maintain an industry-leading safety record.

5. Stock Control, Management Oversight, Material Control, and Quality

- **Inventory Optimisation:** Provide oversight of finished goods stock management to minimise holding costs while meeting demand, utilising accurate forecasting and inventory control systems.
- **Raw Material Quality:** Ensure rigorous incoming material quality control and management processes are in place for all aggregates, cement, and additives, directly impacting final product quality.
- **Product Quality Assurance:** Implement and enforce a comprehensive Quality Management System QMS, ensuring all products consistently meet relevant standards and Lignacite's specifications.

6. Supplier and Merchant Management (Pricing/Negotiations)

- **Strategic Sourcing:** Manage relationships and performance with Tier 1 suppliers (e.g., key raw materials, critical maintenance services) to secure the best balance of cost, quality, and reliability.
- **Negotiation and Contracts:** Lead pricing negotiations and contract reviews with major suppliers and merchant partners to leverage purchasing power and secure long-term, favourable terms.
- **Supply Chain Resilience:** Develop and implement strategies to ensure the resilience of the supply chain, mitigating risks associated with material shortages or delivery disruptions.

Candidate Specification

We are looking for a **senior management professional** who is deeply embedded in the day-to-day operations and possesses the strategic vision to impact the future direction of the company.

Required Attributes:

- **Hands-On Leadership:** A highly hands-on and practical approach with a significant on-site presence is essential. You must be prepared to lead from the front and set a clear example for all employees.
- **Resilience and Work Ethic:** Needs to be exceptionally hard working and resilient, capable of navigating the demands and challenges of a heavy manufacturing environment.
- **Strategic Vision:** Possesses the ability to see the bigger picture and demonstrates board level potential and commercial acumen, aligning operational strategy with company-wide goals.
- **Curiosity and Drive:** A high level of curiosity and an inquisitive nature, driving continuous improvement and a proactive approach to problem-solving.

Background and Sector Experience:

- **Sector Expertise:** Must come from a strong product and processing background.
- **Relevant Industry Experience:** Significant senior management experience within heavy industry sectors such as Heavy Manufacturing, FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods), Aggregates, or Quarrying.

The Opportunity

This role is a unique opportunity to join a successful and well-respected business. The outgoing director, Allan Eastwood, will remain on the board and is fully committed to working with the new director to ensure a smooth transition and their long-term success. The successful candidate will be expected to rapidly acquire a comprehensive understanding of the business with the ultimate goal of operating at the board level within a reasonable timeframe.

If you are a driven, experienced, and hands-on operational leader ready for a significant step in your career, we encourage you to apply.