

Success Story
2nd Quarter 2016
ATN-Auburn University

Client:

Cumberland Plastic Solutions

City:

Auburn

State: Auburn, Alabama

Zip:

36832

NAICS Code:

326100 – Plastic Product Manufacturing

Client Size:

181 employees in two manufacturing facilities – one in Auburn, another in Opelika, Ala.

Project/Event:

Workforce Job-Driven Training in the areas of Six Sigma, TS6949 Internal Auditor, TWI Job Instruction/Job Methods, Kata, 8-Step Problem Solving, Teambuilding, Standards, 5s, QCO

Success Story Title:

ATN TRAINING IN MULTIPLE AREAS IS HELPING COMPANY IMPROVE, EXPAND

Company Profile:

Cumberland Plastic Solutions is a *TS16949* certified, privately held company that provides a variety of plastics solutions in engineering, material selection, tooling, program management, injection molding, and assembly. Cumberland Plastic Solutions serves the area's growing automotive industry as well as a number of other manufacturing sectors, including electronics/telecommunications, heavy industrial equipment, small engine manufacturing and outdoor consumer products. Current production is three shifts, five days/week.

Situation:

To increase operational efficiency and to enhance its competitiveness in a volatile market, the company has launched a program of continuous improvement training to develop the skills of its management team and overall workforce. Personnel were selected to participate from among all levels of the operation, including groups of operators, supervisors and lead managers.

ATN – MEP's Role:

ATN-AU identified a coordinated and broad training program to assist Cumberland Plastic Solutions in providing essential training in the key areas of Six Sigma statistical process control for key managers; TS16949 Internal Auditor training for key quality personnel; and TWI Job Instruction (JI) and Job Methods (JM) training for groups of team leads. In a separate program, ATN-AU proposed and delivered training in the Kata coaching and management skills, 8-Step Problem Solving, Teambuilding, Standards, 5s and Quick Changeover (QCO). Company investment for this program scope totaled \$75,000 and involved nearly 1,000 training hours. Potential impacts exceed that initial investment total and continue to be calculated.

Results:

Training was conducted over a period of 12 months at the company's Auburn manufacturing facility and in an off-site classroom facility. This training is helping Cumberland Plastics to remain

competitive, to save and create jobs; and to expand to meet strategic capacity and production goals.

“In my opinion, the best overall result from this training has been the improved communications that it fostered,” says company Training and Safety Coordinator Kathy Jackson.

Operations Manager David Bonner and Quality Manager Aditya Deshpande echo Jackson’s opinion, but add that operating efficiencies – while actual impacts are still to be determined – are vastly improved and continue to do so. Moreover, the training has helped the company’s expansion into a second manufacturing facility in neighboring Opelika, Ala. to go more smoothly and efficiently.

In the area of TS6949 Internal Auditor Training, Cumberland officials say its participation is directly responsible for the company recently becoming TS 16949 certified and for its internal as well as its external registrar audits being successful.

“We have conducted six internal quality audits and have been successfully audited twice by our external registrar since this training, all with positive results,” Jackson said.

In the area of Six Sigma, the acquired ability to design effective statistical process control experiments and to compile and analyze the data more effectively is helping the company to reduce defects by showing where modifications are needed in the manufacturing process.

“We still are analyzing our data, but we know where our defect causing issues are now, and we are fixing them” said Deshpande.

TWI and other teambuilding and leadership skills has helped the company in such ways as to improve its training of new employees, to establish effective visual management tools throughout its two manufacturing facilities, to improve the leadership and supervisory effectiveness and the communication skills of team leads, smooth the shift turnover process, and reduce the equipment changeover time between customer product manufacturing by as much as 50 percent in some situations.

The company also – by gaining better process stability – has been able to reduce its reliance on a temporary work force, eliminate redundant and unnecessary process steps, and to even establish some formerly temporary jobs as permanent positions.



COST SAVINGS

\$28,840



INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

45 percent improvement in production efficiency on some lines; defect reduction



INCREASED JOBS

the creation of 3 new jobs + retention of 180 jobs averaging a local impact of some \$480,000 annually



CULTURE

a change in leadership culture driving results

**TIME**

reduced product changeover time by 45% or more

**NEW PRODUCT**

contributed to the expansion/transition to a second manufacturing facility in neighboring Opelika, AL.

**TRAINING**

Six Sigma, TS16949 Internal Auditor, TWI Job Instruction/Job Methods, Kata, 8-Step Problem Solving, Teambuilding, Standards, 5s, QCO

**NEW INVESTMENT**

\$75,000 investment in training and 1,000 man-hours + capital investment in new manufacturing plant and new manufacturing plant equipment

Testimonial:

“This was excellent training,” said Jackson. “We are glad that ATN-AU was able to help us to not only get this training from very qualified instructors, but also, accomplish it quickly.”

The bulk of this training was delivered by ATN-AU instructors Hank Czarnecki and Mark Clark. Dr. Clark continues to work with the company in coaching and advising its newly trained Black Belts in their Six Sigma initiatives.

Company Contact:

Kathy Jackson
Training and Safety Coordinator
229 Teague Ct.
Auburn, AL 36832
334.787.7164
Kathy.jackson@cumberlandps.com