

**Client:** Seohan Auto USA

**City:** Auburn

**State:** Alabama

**Zip:** 36832

**NAICS Code:** 336350 – Motor Vehicle Transmission and Power Train Parts Manufacturing

**Client Size:** 224 employees

**Project/Events:** Skills Upgrade Training

**Success Story Title:**

ATN assistance helping automotive firm to reduce employee training cycle and improve process

**Company Profile:**

Seohan Auto USA is an Auburn, Ala.-based tier-1 supplier for the Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Company, located in Montgomery, Ala. Seohan came to Auburn seven years ago (in 2007) as a subsidiary of Korea Flange Company Ltd. of Seoul, South Korea. The company manufactures front and rear axle assemblies.

**Situation:**

Seohan employs 224 in its Auburn facility. Recently, a number of its production line personnel were promoted into team lead, supervisory and lead training positions. Most of these 15 team members had very little to no training for serving in a leadership role. The company approached ATN-AU seeking training programs to provide these team members with the supervisory and leadership skills needed to support them in their new roles.

**Solution:**

ATN-AU consulted with Seohan officials to develop a training agenda to address the key areas of Human Relations and Leadership, Communication and Team Building, and Resource Allocation Decision Making.

ATN-AU, on behalf of Seohan, developed and submitted an application the Alabama Office of Workforce Development for training funds under the state's Existing Industry Training Program for Region 8. A

training agenda was developed to provide 40 hours of training to these 15 team members in the areas of Training Within Industry (TWI) Job Relations and Job Instruction. Additional training was included in Relationship Diversity and Understanding, Industrial Leadership, Leadership and Sustaining Improvement, Leader Standard Work and Team Building.

Assistance in the Relationship Diversity and Understanding training was obtained from the Alexander City, Ala. ATN Center.

The Workforce Development Office approved Seohan's application for \$15,000 as one-to-one matching support. Training activities began in Dec. 2013 and took place through April 5, 2014. ATN delivered a total of 1,600 training hours in this program.

**Results:**

"We trained a total of 15 employees serving in the positions of shift and team leads and one as a lead training instructor," said Seohan Human Resources Manager Aimee Sikes. "Because of our multi-shift operation, we asked ATN to be flexible in how we scheduled the training and exercises, and ATN was very flexible."

Sikes says that the primary result to date is that Seohan is beginning to see a reduction in its employee training curve. Additionally, the training has taught them how to develop and deliver their training materials more effectively and with better results.

TWI Job Instruction training is designed to teach those with training responsibilities how to break job tasks down into key points and important steps, and to present them in a highly effective and memorable manner. TWI Job Relations training is designed for the leader/supervisor and teaches how to understand people on all levels and lead in an unbiased, motivational way. TWI training modules are structured in four-hour blocks over five days. The Relationship and Diversity block was presented in one four-hour session, while the Leadership pieces were presented over four separate eight-hour sessions, including day and night shifts and a Saturday at the Auburn University Challenge Course for team building activities.

"At Seohan, it has taken anywhere from one day to three weeks to train new employees in job tasks," Sikes said. "As a result of this training and focusing on breaking jobs down into key points and important steps, we are seeing our training curve shortening. Our objective is to reduce that training by at least half."

Sikes adds that participants also now display more confidence in their new leadership roles and notable professionalism in their interaction with employees under their supervisory charge.

“As managers, we also have learned how to more effectively plan and conduct our work day to be more effective as leaders and supervisors, and to get more done more efficiently,” Sikes adds.

The company matched the Workforce Development grant with a \$15,000 investment of its own. This translates to about a \$2,000-per-employee training investment. Additionally, participating employees who completed the full training program received a \$450 bonus.

Sikes says that gains in efficiency are already being noticed. Moreover, employee morale and confidence levels are notably higher.

**Testimonial:**

“Seohan management believes in the value of this training,” Sikes says. “Although we can’t accurately quantify a return on this initial investment at this point, we fully believe that the return in efficiencies in job performance and reduced employee training time will far outweigh the investment.

“We are extremely pleased with ATN – how good the quality of the training was and how cooperative and flexible ATN was in meeting our varied schedule needs in delivering the training,” Sikes said. “This was a great experience for us and we are already looking at expanding and building on this program with a future component.”