

# Success in **Operations**

*Innovative project team fast-tracks new facility; puts SK Hand Tools back on the market*

## **SK HAND TOOL, LLC**



40 Employees



Sycamore, Illinois



[www.sktools.com](http://www.sktools.com)

### **SITUATION**

Seeking diversification opportunities, Ideal Industries of DeKalb County sought to acquire a company in a complementary industry. Ideal leaders learned that Chicago-based SK Hand Tools was filing for bankruptcy, and Ideal became the only United States company to make a bid for SK's assets. The four other bidders, located in Asia, wanted to acquire the SK brand name and customer list and move the work offshore.

### **SOLUTION**

Ideal was ultimately awarded the bid and engaged IMEC to help initiate a start-up operation to build hand tools for the automotive maintenance and industrial sectors. Company leaders drew on IMEC's strategic advisement to aid in the selection of a location, decision on adaptation of an existing facility vs. a greenfield site, and all aspects of the design, layout and optimization of a newly re-constituted SK Tools operation.

Here's the catch: The entire process, from construction of the 130,000 square-foot facility to the acquisition of technology and the placement of equipment and set up of production cells, needed to be completed in 8 months in order for the company to win back work from existing SK customers. IMEC's innovative project team worked with SK Engineers and team members borrowed from Ideal Industries to develop the individual processes, work flows, cells, personnel requirements, square-footage calculations, kanbans, pull systems and, eventually, a full facility build-out and internal operational layout. The company manufactured and shipped its first product within the 8 month window.

As a result, a venerable U.S. brand is back in circulation, providing auto mechanics with the tools they need to maintain American autos, and the Industrial community with the tools they need to keep American factories humming.

### **RESULTS**

- New, 130,000 square foot manufacturing facility
- 40 new jobs
- \$16 million capital investment
- Met on-time ship deadline customer orders



info@imec.org | 888-806-4632