

# Success in **Operations**

*Southwest Illinois Manufacturer Re-Focuses Efficiency on Customer Needs.*

## **SPARTAN LIGHT METAL PRODUCTS, INC.**

 425 Employees  Sparta, Illinois  [www.spartanImp.com](http://www.spartanImp.com)

### **SITUATION**

As customers continue to demand higher quality and lower prices, Spartan Light Metal Products consistently stays ahead of the curve using innovative methods to solve the customer's problem and ensure as-ordered products and on-time delivery. To help reduce potential competition Spartan knew it was time to make imperative lean improvements including optimization of cell design and layout and reduction in set-up time for machines. Spartan engaged IMEC for continuous improvement activities to optimize the existing manufacturing operations and initiate a training program for the staff, as well as create an efficiency plan for a new manufacturing line.

### **SOLUTION**

The Spartan team worked with IMEC to identify the cell design and layout issues to be addressed to reduce set-up time on a specific machine. IMEC led the cross-functional team of employees through a series of continuous improvement training sessions including the Lean 101, Value Stream Mapping, Total Productive Maintenance, Pull/Kanban and Quick Changeover/Set-up Reduction, which gave them the capabilities and strategic direction to plan and implement the new machine line.

"The training gave our team the opportunity to look at common assistance for external set-up time on the targeted machine as well as others slated for the new manufacturing line," said Glenn Dunbar, Human Resources Manager. "With a new employee focused on lean, and the motivation of our engineering team on the floor, we can apply the same principles going forward and really keep the team and initiatives on track." The Spartan Light Metal Products team has already begun to see results from the initial machine changeover improvements and with little additional equipment invested, six additional business improvement teams have since implemented the same process and will be seeing results soon.

### **RESULTS**

- Anticipated job creation for 36 new employees
- Estimated \$50,000 in retained sales per year
- Reduced machine set-up time from 4.1 to 1.9 hours bi-weekly on one machine
- Identification of additional lean implementation tactics

*“I would recommend IMEC to anyone looking to improve their lean initiatives. The IMEC team is very knowledgeable and easy to work with. The instructors speak to our employees on their level and that helps with engagement; very popular with our people.”*

- Glenn Dunbar, Human Resources Manager



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