

\$88,180 Cost Savings
per project

4,634 Jobs Created
and Retained

770 Companies
Assisted

\$435,475,000 Aggregate
Impact to
Illinois Economy

991 Value Added
Services & Projects

\$289,241 Investment
Spending
per project

\$1,239,962 New and
Retained Sales
per project

2019
Client
Reported
Impacts



SK Hand Tools

Sycamore, IL | 40 Employees | 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 made a bid for SK's assets.

IMEC Solution

Ideal 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 needed to be completed in 8 months in order for the company to win back work from existing SK customers.

IMEC's innovative team, SK Engineers, and Ideal team members worked 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 customer 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

Litania Sports Group

Champaign, IL | 150 Employees | www.litaniasports.com

Situation

Litania was interested in zero based budgeting, which the CEO had proposed to the management team in August 2016 to address the company's desire for aggressive growth in untapped markets. Having done previous work with IMEC, Litania trusted the training would result in cost reduction by the end of their fiscal year, September 30, 2017.

IMEC Solution

In August 2017 Litania enlisted IMEC to fine tune what they had learned and strengthen its deployment of the 80/20 Business Optimization Process. For this to be successful, the employees needed to be on board and have a full grasp of zero based budgeting, the 80/20 principle, and how it applies. This would allow them to focus more on high profitability projects and not so much on one-off projects. As a result of the 80/20 training for two consecutive years, Litania was able to eliminate an entire division that did not bring value to customers or profits for Litania. This freed up resources and made room for more profitable items in other divisions. In addition, the employees responded well to the training and learned how to work with challenging customers.

Results

- **\$54,000,000** anticipated in new and retained sales
- **\$1,010,000** in new investments in equipment, workforce development and information systems
- Improved **customer engagement**
- Improved **employee engagement**



Prater Industries

Bolingbrook, IL | 90 Employees | www.praterindustries.com

Situation

Prater Industries engineers and manufactures custom grinding and milling equipment, as well as replacement parts. Prater's ordering was prepared manually and stored as a hard copy until 2016 when they began the process of digitizing decades of paper files. They attempted to outsource and hire part time talent, which proved to have little luck. This led Prater to ask IMEC for help.

IMEC Solution

IMEC experts introduced the idea of creating a neurodiverse work environment that incorporated the autistic workforce. IMEC partnered with Autism Workforce which helps companies align the workplace to suit employees with autism and by place individuals in positions. Prater staff were trained how to interact with Marice, their new neurodiverse employee, on communication strategies for success and universal standard work and implemented visual work instructions. IMEC and Autism Workforce assisted Prater with the onboarding process until productivity stabilized. In a short time, Marice is already producing far greater scans per hour than previous employees.

Results

- Improved **customer satisfaction**
- Reduced search time from **1-3 hours to 3 minutes** or less
- **Reduced turnover** rate
- Improved **Employee Engagement**

Doran Scales

St. Charles, IL | 20 Employees | www.doranscales.com

Situation

Doran Scales faced the realization that they could no longer operate living off of high profits, consistent customers, and minimal demand for quality products. Mark Podl, CEO, knew they needed significant improvement, starting with the shop floor operations.

IMEC Solution

The Doran Scales team and IMEC laid out a plan for an improvement to the physical plant layout through several Kaizen events. By streamlining manufacturing processes and organizing tools and people in a more efficient flow, the team was able to kick start the journey to lean. Over the next three years, IMEC facilitated ongoing improvements to their shop floor, facility layout, and quality management system. Through various continuous improvement activities, the Doran Scales team was able to realize immediate efficiencies and see the return on investment in a new piece of equipment in only 90 days, an into a larger facility to meet their customer's needs.

Results

- Optimized productivity and **increased output with fewer individuals**
- Improved people & material flow, reduced steps to ship a pallet from **150 to 25**
- **Increased team accountability** and cross training to decrease the strain on people resources