

Situation

Fuyao Glass Illinois Inc., an automotive glass company in Mt. Zion, Illinois, has worked with IMEC in the past on several projects, including leadership training, strategic management, quality systems, lean, safety and a variety of other work over their 12 year-long relationship. With their company growing and new customer requirements needing to be met, it only made sense to reach out to IMEC for assistance. Fuyao had previously worked with IMEC to complete their ISO 9001:2015 quality system certification. When key automotive customers asked them to achieve accreditation to the laboratory standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017 for Mechanical Testing, this presented a new set of challenges. While ISO 9001 requires a company to “document what you do, and then do it”, ISO/IEC 17025 requires the company to demonstrate competence in the field in which they’re accredited. Fuyao recognized that to implement ISO/IEC 17025 effectively and efficiently, they would need outside expertise for support and guidance.

IMEC Solution

IMEC engaged one of its quality experts who specializes in ISO/IEC 17025 testing and calibration lab systems to help Fuyao Glass Illinois develop processes and procedures, as well as train staff in the ISO/IEC 17025 standard requirements. The IMEC consultant came in and provided that extra level of knowledge and specific hands-on understanding of what it takes to earn the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation, as well as to assure they could effectively maintain and manage the system after accreditation was achieved. A major component of ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation is being able to prove that your company is capable of maintaining stringent laboratory standards on a consistent basis. IMEC collaborated with Fuyao Glass Illinois to make sure that they were prepared beyond the initial testing level required – and go even further. When the company achieved accreditation to the ISO/IEC 17025 standard in February 2023, they were elated to learn from the accreditation body that their system was more robust and effective than 90% of the systems he had audited!

Fuyao Glass Illinois learned during the ISO/IEC 17025 implementation that the collaborative effort with IMEC allowed them to create new operating practices that are more catered to their workforce, making them stand out as a premier “standard of excellence” in the eyes of their customers. Working with IMEC on this project, as well as the many initiatives described above, has helped Fuyao Glass Illinois achieve its commitment to continuous improvement and pleasing customers, as well as developing employee skills

Results

As a result of achieving certification to the various ISO standards, Fuyao Glass Illinois has been able to not only preserve several million dollars in sales to existing customers, but has also been able to achieve significant sales growth with new customers in new industry segments such as the sustainable energy market. Coupled with the leadership development and technical training Fuyao provides to its employees, they have created a positive culture of continuous improvement that has allowed the company to reduce operating costs while making Fuyao Glass Illinois “a great place to work”.

“Working with IMEC through certification of ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 17025:2017 as well as many training opportunities such as leadership training, quality management, Lean, etc. has been more like a partnership with Fuyao Glass Illinois Inc. IMEC’s leadership and professional contacts has allowed Fuyao Glass Illinois to expand in many glass markets while growing our company’s culture, brand and future. Thank you IMEC!”

Rick Price, Vice President - Fuyao Glass Illinois Inc.