

Igniting Illinois Manufacturing Excellence and Global Competitiveness.

2024 Client-Reported Impacts



2,890

Companies Assisted



\$873,325,164

Aggregate Impact
to the Illinois Economy



19:1

Return on Investment



7,736

Jobs Created and Retained



\$2,050,432

Average New and Retained Sales
per client/project



\$244,858

Average Cost Savings
per client/project



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY.

Velocity Metalworks
Hoffman, IL | 20 employees

The Situation: Velocity Metalworks provides full-service tool & die, metal stamping, fabrication, and contract manufacturing for tier 1 and OEM manufacturers of some of the most demanding products and industries. Founded in 1970, they have partnered with clients to provide creative metal fabrication solutions to the most demanding challenges, in the most demanding industries. With the recent addition of the Hoffman, IL site, the leadership team identified the need to obtain feedback from their workforce on how they felt about the organization. The timing provided a good opportunity to be transparent about organizational change, and to develop a strong company culture.

The Solution: IMEC worked with the company to define their desired changes and developed a strategy for employee engagement. IMEC collaborated with AAIM Employers' Association, a trusted partner that is dedicated to providing customers with high-quality HR tools, resources, and services. A detailed survey of all employees was undertaken, and results were presented to the company leaders. The gaps to achieving a strong culture were identified, and the leaders collaborated with the facilitator to develop an action plan to make improvements.

This project significantly benefited Velocity Metalworks by providing insight into the factors driving and hindering positive employee engagement. The prioritized improvement opportunities led to enhanced engagement, and the work plan provided a clear path to drive change within the organization. As a result, Velocity Metalworks was able to attract quality candidates, retain current employees, and foster a more positive and productive work environment.

- Results**
- New Sales: \$250,000
 - Retained Sales: \$1,000,000
 - Jobs Retained: 5
 - Total Cost Savings: \$950,000

SUCCESS IN OPERATIONS.

The Caldwell Group Inc.
Rockford, IL | 75 employees

The Situation: The Caldwell Group Inc., a material handling equipment manufacturer, has provided their customers with a variety of high-quality workplace products, including industrial lifting and forklift truck attachments for over 70 years. The leadership at The Caldwell Group recognized the importance and long-lasting positive impacts of receiving the ISO 9001:2015 certification, as it provides another level of credibility to their reputation and sets them up for success. The certification provides further evidence that the work being done in their organization is of the utmost quality, especially when much of the work being done already fits within the parameters of the certification.

The Solution: The ISO 9001:2015 certification requires auditor training over a 2-1/2-day period for up to 7 employees, in which they participate in both classroom and hands-on training in the facility. The training is designed to provide credentials to leaders in the organization for ISO 9001:2015, as well as meet and exceed the requirements to obtain the certification.

Day 1 starts with an overview of the standards and requirements of the certification and provides an understanding of what is required now and in the future. Day 2 provides a strong focus on the audit process, including how to use the tools and resources, developing a strong audit question matrix, problem identification, audit writing, and completing closing meetings. Day 3 consists of a comprehensive mock audit, where participants complete the audit from start to completion, further ensuring the understanding and preparation as an auditor. This ending session brings all the insights learned within the first 2 days together to show how the quality management system acts throughout the entire workplace.

- Results**
- Aggregate Impacts of \$74,923
 - New Sales of \$36,747
 - 7 Employee Certifications

EXPANDED WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT.

K & K Abrasives
Chicago, IL | 8 employees

The Situation: Established in 1948, K & K Abrasives is a leading manufacturer of superior quality abrasive products. As a family-owned business with 65 years of experience, they employ state of the art equipment, utilize premium grade materials, and offer a vast array of products to satisfy the individual needs of their customers. With recently acquiring a new company in Indianapolis, K & K Abrasives was looking to build a more modernized website, as the previous one they used had no e-commerce functionality and was not used as a marketing tool.

The Solution: K & K Abrasives was referred to IMEC in February of 2024 through our partnership with the Greater Southwest Development Corporation and Jim Longino, Director of Industrial Development. After the connection was made, both parties began creating a website to promote the client's brand professionally and accurately and attract new customers. With the new website, they wanted to tell the story of their company: a blue collar company from Chicago that helped the city grow over the past seven decades. With the help of Third Party Resource MFG Empire, K & K has been able to target the online customer base with appropriate functionalities.

The results this project development will have on K & K Abrasives touches three different areas: financials, workforce, and expansion. Over the next year, they are expected do over \$1,000,000 of revenue, with \$2.3 million expected the year after. They are also looking to hire 15 new employees over the next year, and within the next few years, bring in a total of 45 employees. Expansion is also on the radar for K & K Abrasives, with them opening up a facility in Austin in the next year, and plans for New York and Florida expansion areas after.

- Results**
- New Sales: \$1,000,000
 - Retained Sales: \$800,000
 - New Jobs: 15
 - Total New Investment: \$315,000

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING.

Midwest Molding Solutions
Bloomington, IL | 20 employees

The Situation: Established in 1996, Midwest Molding Solutions offers a range of services including injection molding, design services, project management, tooling, automation, ultrasonic welding, assembly, and packaging. The company has been experiencing tremendous growth, leading to the promotion of several new managers with limited management experience. In order to address this leadership skills gap, Midwest Molding Solutions determined they wanted to transform their managers from being just "doers" into effective leaders with a broad skill-set, who would delegate tasks appropriately.

The Solution: With the help of IMEC Technical Specialist Joanne Romero, who focuses on the people aspect within an organization, a plan was put in place to deliver four skills development workshops that addressed the largest gaps. These four topics included:

- Communication-Connect Through Conversations, which emphasized the importance of addressing both the business outcomes and the emotional aspects of conversations.
- Coaching for High Performance, which helped leaders learn multi-directional coaching skills and the proactive inquiry method to enhance team interactions.
- Driving Change, which equipped leaders with the skills to turn resistance into commitment and inspire others to embrace change.
- Your Leadership Journey, which provided the knowledge and skills needed to transition from individual contributor to the leader role.

The training helped reduce turnover, improve attendance, and boost morale of the company's workforce.... leading to an increase in productivity as well.

- Results**
- Aggregate Impacts: \$71,651
 - Cost Savings: \$16,000
 - Total New Investment: \$8,000

