CLIENT SUCCESS: B/E AEROSPACE INC

North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership

By joining E3, we saw an opportunity to gain a professional and knowledgeable third party critique of our progress, potential opportunities, and validation as to whether we were investing our finite resources wisely. Having now participated in the process, we are better equipped for the next phase of our organizational growth.

Liam O'Boyle,
Vice President and General Manager, West Point Seating Division

B/E Aerospace Pilots Model of Sustainability

B/E Aerospace provides aircraft interior products and solutions for the commercial, business jet and military markets. Its West Point Seating Business, located in Winston-Salem, assembles seats for Boeing, Airbus and Bombardier.

Situation:

B/E is the first manufacturer to participate in North Carolina's pilot E3 initiative, a NIST MEP project involving EPA and others. The E3 (Economy, Energy and Environment) is a collaborative program which includes federal, state and local agencies working together to help manufacturers be more competitive and sustainable. The E3 program provides consultation, access to resources for implementation and solutions, and a self-sustaining component where manufacturers may share best practices and meet their long-term sustainability goals. B/E Aerospace became involved in this pilot program after recognizing the synergy between the business plan that they were executing and the business model that the E3 initiative was promoting.

Solution:

E3 leveraged experts in each field of assessment. As a team, the experts assessed, compiled and recommended improvements to form one comprehensive, strategic report. This report included baseline data, the improvement metrics designed to address specific problems, as well as savings determined from implementation. B/E's unique set of assessments included:

Economy
Steven Forrest, NC MEP improvement specialist and Shingo expert, encouraged ownership of work zones by the actual workers operating in that zone and recommended a report-out to management on each team's ongoing continuous improvement activity, which helps build leadership.

Energy
An assessment of energy use was conducted and the findings were typical including turning off all equipment at night, repairing air leaks, and installing lighting occupancy sensors. Using the EPA Climate Leaders Simplified GHG Emissions Calculator, B/E's carbon footprint was calculated. B/E is now trained to use the calculator and can self-evaluate their GHG emissions using the results as a key sustainability indicator moving forward.

Environment
A green assessment was also conducted. Most of the waste accumulated at the B/E facility is in the form of packaging, particularly corrugated cardboard. The assessment recommended a 'reduce, reuse, recycle philosophy' to reduce solid waste streams by finding alternatives. Those alternatives included, among other things, negotiating a change in packaging from suppliers to recyclable material or identifying a source for reuse, which will allow B/E to decrease materials heading to the landfill.

Results:

- $46,700 in plant improvements
- Investment in workforce practices of $41,280

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