

E3 ASSESSMENT EASES BUSINESS TRANSITION

ABOUT HUNTINGTON PLATING. Huntington Plating provides specialized, high-quality electroplating, hydraulic cylinder repair and manufacturing, and machining and fabrication services to a number of different industries. Based in Huntington, West Virginia, the family-owned business was founded in 1947 and has grown to 12 employees. With a focus on quality and service, Huntington Plating continues to successfully meet the challenges of an ever-changing customer base.

THE CHALLENGE. Huntington Plating was entering a period of transition as owner Tom Houvouras started handing over direction of the company to his son, Marc. As part of this transition, Marc was interested in developing a baseline assessment of various areas of the business. "Preparing to take over management and primary responsibility of an industrial business in the U.S. during the current economic and regulatory climate is an overwhelming prospect, to say the least," explained Marc. "In order to create a long-term strategic plan that will guide our family business through another generation of sustainability, I felt it was critical to understand exactly where we stood as a company, both operationally and administratively."

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Marc learned of West Virginia MEP, a NIST MEP affiliate, and the services they provide, including the E3 Assessment. E3 stands for Economy, Energy, and Environment, and the assessment is designed to help companies improve in all three areas. As part of the E3 program, the WVMEP team worked with Huntington Plating staff to conduct an on-site business evaluation for the company. Over a period of approximately three months, the team conducted eight assessments: 1) CoreValue Business Assessment; 2) Growth & Innovation Opportunities Assessment; 3) Initial Health & Safety Consultation; 4) Environmental Compliance Assessment; 5) Quality Program Assessment; 6) Lean Manufacturing & Process Assessment; 7) Maintenance Organization & Systems Assessment; 8) Energy Assessment. The goal of each assessment was to identify recommendations and improvement opportunities that Huntington Plating could use to strengthen the business.

WVMEP compiled the recommendations from each assessment into a summary for Huntington Plating. "The assessment process was thorough and robust, covering all areas of the business I was interested in understanding better," said Marc. "We decided to engage WVMEP further to help us complete some of the projects that were identified during the E3 Assessment. We are currently in the middle of this work, and already seeing results."

"The WVMEP employees that came to our location to conduct the assessment were all knowledgeable, helpful, and friendly. The observations and recommendations they made have proven to be accurate and highly beneficial. I look forward to a long, productive partnership with WVMEP."

-Marc Houvouras, Owner

RESULTS



Assessment found a value gap of **\$110,000**



Made **75** recommendations for improvement



Recommendations valued over **\$20,000** per year



13 recommendations leading to new customers or markets



ISO gap recommendation for full certification

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