

## COOPERATING ACROSS STATE LINES

**ABOUT HARDWARE RESOURCES, INC.** Hardware Resources opened their doors in 1989 to design, engineer and manufacture products for the kitchen cabinet, bath and closet industries. The company offers 24,000 products in 13 product groups within three distinct brands: Jeffrey Alexander, Elements and the Hardware Resources product line. Hardware Resources ships stocked products within 24 hours to customers across the United States and Canada from seven warehouses across the country. One of those warehouses is in Bossier City, Louisiana, with 130 employees.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Hardware Resources was in need of Lean training, specifically in performing Kaizen events. When the company contacted Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions (the Arkansas MEP Center) for assistance, independent consultant Bob Terhune referred Hardware Resources to the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL), also part of the MEP National Network™.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** MEPOL Project Director Rebecca Scherff contracted third-party consulting firm Agile Performance, LLC., to conduct a Lean Initiative Training for Hardware Resources. The training, which took place in Shreveport, Louisiana, consisted of a three-day Lean/General Consulting workshop and a five-day Kaizen Blitz Event. Agile Performance conducted a Lean Assessment of the Shreveport facility and reviewed findings from the training in a follow-up meeting. The Lean Initiative provided time for MEPOL personnel to train, mentor, coach, and support personnel in initiating, learning, implementing and sustaining Lean and continuous improvement activities. Hardware Resources completed a five-day Kaizen Event as an improvement project based on the findings from the Lean Assessment and training events.

By investing in Lean, Hardware Resources has generated over one million dollars in savings and is adding and retaining jobs. In just one year, "Door Manufacturing (area of focus) has improved by 4 percent" over the previous year, according to Plant Operation Manager Randy Grace. "We have developed written standard work instructions throughout the operations," Grace said, "developing training and audit procedures for process control and continuous improvement opportunities."

"Hardware Resources has continued our implementation of the Lean Principles and initiatives we identified with MEPOL. We are undertaking a complete reorganization of plant operations to synchronize manufacturing processes for each specific product as recommended by the MEPOL team."

-Randy Grace, Plant Operation Manager

## RESULTS



Cost savings of **\$1,551,000**



**24** new/retained jobs



New investment of **\$55,000**

## CONTACT US



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