

TRAINING SUPERVISORS TO BECOME BETTER MANAGERS

ABOUT PLASTIC PRODUCTS COMPANY, INC. Plastic Products Inc. (PPC) was founded in 1962 in Minnesota, and in the 1980s expanded to two facilities in Kentucky to better serve the appliance customer base. A 100-percent-employee-owned company, PPC covers a broad range of industries, including automotive and consumer products. The company has around 80 team members in Greenville, Kentucky, with the skills to mold and assemble products to customer specification.

THE CHALLENGE. In an area experiencing a below-average unemployment rate, PPC found identifying and retaining skilled employees and supervisors to be increasingly challenging. The company already had experience engaging with Advantage Kentucky Alliance (AKA), part of the MEP National Network™, and was committed to maintaining growth while providing strong customer service. This time, PPC decided to reach out to AKA specifically to provide its supervisors with the tools to become better managers.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. AKA led a cross-section of PPC's management staff from three facilities through the "Training Within Industry" (TWI) program. TWI is designed to help participants develop the skills to train others, improve employee relations, and lead Kaizen improvement events. The biggest bottom line impacts came from the group's Job Methods/Kaizen Proposals. By tracking the current state of three key processes, each of the three teams uncovered opportunities for improving current methods. They made changes to reduce machine downtime and increase capacity, impacting sales and generating overhead savings for PCC. With greater capacity, the company also reduced labor costs, including workers' comp insurance premium costs.

"AKA and their TWI offering enabled our supervisors to learn tools in the classroom through interacting with multiple exercises and case studies. Armed with a Standard Process, Documentation Format and 4 Step Pocket Card, the teams were able to find process waste and formally propose positive change."

-Bob Griessel, Director of Manufacturing

RESULTS



Added **\$228k** in sales



Reduced labor costs by **\$4k** annually, or .02%



Reduced machine downtime to generate **\$36k** output off of one machine

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