

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

ABOUT DONNELLY CUSTOM MANUFACTURING CO. Donnelly Custom Manufacturing, based in Alexandria, Minnesota, focuses on short-run, close-tolerance molding for industrial products. Its 225 employees annually manage 2,800 active molds, over 600 different materials and 15,000 mold changeovers.

THE CHALLENGE. Donnelly's president, Ron Kirscht, and the company's leadership embrace strategic planning as a company-wide exercise. Kirscht was looking for an outside perspective to help craft a strategic plan that would serve as a "holistic look" for the company that would help its executives assess the high points, valleys, and "fruited plains" of its competitive landscape.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Strategy experts from Enterprise Minnesota, part of the MEP National Network™, facilitated a strategic planning process that analyzed 21 business categories that Kirscht says cultivated a "healthy tension" throughout the company as managers evaluated the company's strengths, weaknesses and needs. At the end of the process, Donnelly produced a strategy road map and action plans to help achieve growth goals and realize the company vision, as well as gaining experience with a repeatable process that will serve the company well into the future.

"The process Enterprise Minnesota uses to help manufacturers work through strategic planning is so comprehensive and robust. This process allows you to probe and assess the entire organization to ensure there is no glossing over any element of the organization, no blind spots in terms of overlooking a glaring weakness, and no sacred cows – real or imagined. This results in a useful and holistic view of the present-state. The output is very balanced and actionable, serving as a better starting point for mapping out the direction forward and the road ahead. Enterprise Minnesota's approach to planning also encourages the involvement of more people at the assessment phase early in the strategic planning process which generates tremendous value and momentum for the refinement, unveiling and implementation phases."

-Ron Kirscht, President

RESULTS



\$9,000,000 in new or retained sales



80 new or retained jobs



\$2,600,000 in new investment



\$600,000 in cost savings

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