

GOLDEN ARTIST COLORS USES ITS CREATIVITY TO IMPROVE ITS BUSINESS

ABOUT GOLDEN ARTISTS COLORS, INC. Golden Artist Colors, Inc., or simply GOLDEN, is an employee-owned manufacturing company founding in 1980 and based in New Berlin, New York, manufacturing paints for the art materials market. The company produces a line of acrylic colors that includes: recreations of historic pigments; the Williamsburg line of artists' oil paints; QoR watercolors; and decorative and architectural paints and mediums. GOLDEN became an employee-owned company in 2002 and currently employs 234 people.

THE CHALLENGE. Golden Artist Colors, Inc., embarked on a project to improve production efficiencies and effectiveness, and requested AM&T provide training in Lean and Continuous Improvement to support the effort. They obtained a Workforce Development Institute (WDI) Grant to offset a portion of their costs.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Golden Artist Colors and AM&T looked at their operations and determined what kind of Lean and Continuous Improvement training would best benefit them. As a result, AM&T provided a series of training events from February to October 2017 to engage employees at all levels. First, an overview in lean thinking and tools provided an overview of lean concepts, with a focus on Standard Work, 5S, and Visual Workplace for all operations employees. Second, two five-day Kaizen events in paint making and filling taught participants how to work as a team designing and implementing improvements using Standard Work, 5S, and Visual Systems. A Kaizen event training taught staff how to facilitate Kaizen events, including planning and preparing activities as well as how to conduct events and perform follow-up. Staff learned basic facilitation tools and team dynamics to promote high performance teams. An 8-Step Problem Solving Training provided problem solving training to help GOLDEN team members learn how to effectively solve and prevent problems that can help save the organization time, money, and resources. Finally, AM&T worked with GOLDEN to create a sustainable continuous improvement program.

"The training and support that was provided to Golden Artist Colors by AM&T was perfect. During the very first site visit I gained the confidence that they really cared about providing us with a proposal that was going to meet our needs. The project manager/trainer provided us with the tools, resources and understanding of Lean with a model that keeps focus on sustaining our efforts and the continued development of our program. Three years into our program we continue to learn and engage our employee owners along the way and continue to reduce costs and increase throughput. We have been provided with the building blocks to have a sustainable Continuous Improvement program and value the relationship that we have established with AM&T."

-Matt Asma, Training and Development Specialist

RESULTS



33 jobs created, and 14 internal promotions



\$40,000 investment in new equipment



50% reduction in cost per piece in the targeted cell

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