

REVAMPING PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODS TO IMPROVE PRODUCT LAUNCHES

ABOUT SKILLED MANUFACTURING-AEROSPACE. Skilled Manufacturing, Inc., or SMI, includes three divisions: automotive, aerospace and specialty. SMI Aerospace was launched in 2008 to cost-effectively serve the private jet, commercial airline and defense industries with precise, American-made components. SMI Aerospace provides comprehensive services including aerospace engineering, project management, and manufacturing excellence specializing in air-frame and engine components. SMI Aerospace employs 120 at their Traverse City, Mich., location, where Lean thinking is thoughtfully applied to work stations, equipment placement and visual management.

THE CHALLENGE. After analyzing their annual company evaluations completed by customers, SMI Aerospace identified an opportunity for improvement in project management. With several new product launches underway, the management team felt the company could benefit from further training in order to improve their project management skills while maximizing impacts of future product development.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. SMI Aerospace partnered with the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center - Northern Lower (The Center-Northern Lower) for a 12-week project management course. Using project management software, participants created detailed project management plans and communicated those plans to stakeholders. Key elements of project planning and management were reviewed and practiced. Participants then used the tools to define and control scope, improve communication, set timelines and accountabilities, maintain momentum and anticipate challenges and risks. The training also was designed to meet the educational component required to participate in the Project Management Institute (PMI) Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) exam.

"Teaming up with The Center and their advanced training capabilities has really paid dividends for SMI. The project management course gave us a chance to step back, realize our inefficiencies and dial in on a solution to effectively re-engineer our APQP processes that rely heavily on managing projects."

-Randy Rodes, President

RESULTS



\$30M in increased sales



18 certified Project Managers, with 16 earning CAPM designation & 2 earning PMP certification



5 successful new product launches



1 new aerospace customer; Re-engineered the APQP process; Improved customer evaluations



Invested in project management software

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