

CONTRACT MANUFACTURER IMPROVES THE PROCESS AROUND A NEW BUSINESS VENTURE

ABOUT ADVANCED METAL COMPONENTS. In 1977, an engineer and entrepreneur bought a punch press and along with his wife, opened the doors to what would become Advanced Metal Components (AMC), a state-of-the-art fabrication shop and contract manufacturer in Swainsboro, Georgia. Their son, Doug Brown, began working in the plant in high school. In 2001, Brown took over the business operations and today he is the president of AMC. The company operates from a 127,000-square-foot facility and supplies contract manufacturing services to businesses in the industrial equipment, construction, medical, refrigeration, recreation, and telecommunications industries.

THE CHALLENGE. A few years ago, as the economy was rebounding, AMC was facing the same situation many manufacturers and businesses across the country were encountering - regaining the business lost in the economic downturn.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Brown knew the most important task for the company to focus on, as they prepared for the growth they were expecting, was to train their front-line supervisors. Brown invited Alan Barfoot, region manager, and Charity Stevens, project manager, with the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech, part of the MEP National Network™, to visit his plant. Once the formal front-line leader training culminated, GaMEP and AMC implemented Managing for Daily Improvement, a set of tactics designed to provide daily real-time communication between these same supervisors and the management team. The previous year, the company had taken on not only a new customer but a new line of business for that customer. They were going to first manufacture their customer's product and now, for the first time, were going to be the warehouse and distribution arm for that customer as well. At first AMC was handling the business in three different parts of the facility, and the process worked well enough until the customer quadrupled their business in one year. Stevens met with Brown and his team to rethink the layout. They combined the customer's operation - manufacturing, warehouse, and distribution, into one area of the facility, and expanded the space AMC used to support this customer by 5,000 square feet.

As a next step to become more efficient, AMC has identified the need to get more productivity out of their paint line. Brown said, "Our paint line has more conveyor line stops than we feel it should and we see an opportunity to increase production by maximizing our hanging density and reducing gaps between color changes." The company is working with Stevens to install an automatic data recorder to track this information and gain a baseline, so that they can determine what's causing the line to stop and identify ways to increase productivity.

"We are building upon each step and we (along with GaMEP) are making long-term improvements that will help support our organization as we continue to grow our business."

-Doug Brown, President

RESULTS



Trained **100** percent of their front-line leaders



Redesigned 12,000-sq-ft customer operation to a 17,000-sq-ft layout



Went from **16** to 12 people and reutilized 4 people into other areas of operations



Improved safety by **100** percent

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