

NYE LUBRICANTS IMPROVING PERFORMANCE WITH LEAN

ABOUT NYE LUBRICANTS INC. Nye Lubricants, located in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, is a leader in the innovation, formulation and manufacture of synthetic lubricants. Their staff of 180 employees combines its integrity, proven experience and deep technical knowledge to solve its customers' toughest engineering challenges. Nye's lubricants add value to products in a wide range of industries and applications.

THE CHALLENGE. Nye Lubricants had worked with MassMEP, part of the MEP National Network™, for a brief period of time in 2006. In 2017 Bernadette Ferreira, Director of Operations, was tasked with getting Nye back on the lean pathway. From its past training, Nye knew that lean could make everyone's job easier; the key to that success would be to educate and train the staff. Bernadette reached out to MassMEP for help.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. MassMEP's Principles of Lean 101 is a hands-on course with classroom instruction, which she knew was ideal for her employees and the future success of their lean journey. After conducting four Lean 101 courses and training almost their entire staff, Nye moved ahead with their own efforts at process improvement. Although successful, the Kaizen efforts were moving slowly and, it seemed to Bernadette, lacked the needed support and focus. Bernadette again called on Mass MEP, and it was agreed that a lean support structure was needed. This entailed lean champion training, the development of a lean oversight committee and full top management support.

The lean champions program identifies and trains key individuals. Each champion examines areas for potential process improvement and implements positive change based on research and project planning, with the help and support of the lean oversight committee and resources provided by top management. One example of a project the lean champions tackled was to look at the ergonomic assessment of bowl cleaning.

When production mixing bowls are cleaned, it can put physical strain on employees as they bend and twist their body. The lean champions began their project by performing a standardized rapid entire body assessment to see what parts of their body were moving during cleaning, how those parts were moving (i.e. twist, bend, leaning) and the angles at which they bent. The assessment concluded that the movement which involved the most ergonomic strain was the act of wiping and scraping semi-solid material on the bottom of the bowl. The team purchased new cleaning equipment that limits the range of motion required to complete the task, one of many improvements made due to Nye's new sustained lean culture.

"This training was an essential part of changing the culture to a lean culture. It was very informative in helping to establish a core team of Lean Champions. Rick Budlong has an extensive knowledge in the training material as well as experience in manufacturing. He helped develop some of the process improvements that were initiated and led to cost savings. Nye will continue to use Mass MEP for future training."

-Bernadette Ferreira, Operations Manager

RESULTS



31% productivity improvement



80% of the company trained in lean terminology



Communication improved and impacted a culture change to one of empowerment and inclusion



Reduce non value added activity



Improved floor space utilization saving time

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