VALUE STREAM MAPPING (VSM)

ABOUT SOMERSET HARDWOOD FLOORING, INC. Somerset Wood Products is one of the largest manufacturers of Appalachian Hardwood Lumber in the United States with over 3.5 million board feet of kiln capacity and 2.5 million board feet of pre-drier capacity. Somerset Hardwood Flooring is a privately owned company with over 50 years growth in the hardwood industry.

THE CHALLENGE. Somerset Hardwood Flooring operates in a highly competitive business environment and has been adversely impacted by trade tariffs imposed by other countries such as China. Somerset contacted Advantage Kentucky Alliance, part of the MEP National Network™, for help.

MEP CENTER’S ROLE. Somerset Hardwood Flooring participated in the SKED ARC SEED 2.0 grant program, which was awarded to approved manufacturers in the ARC region. An operations assessment identified suggested areas for improvement. Somerset Hardwoods elected to begin with AKA’s Leadership Suite which is designed to develop effective supervisory and leadership skills among front line leaders and potential leaders. This was followed by AKA’s Lean 101 simulation workshop and value stream mapping workshop. After the value steam mapping specifically, Somerset Hardwood personnel were led through several VSM Kaizen days on Somerset Hardwood Flooring’s factory floor. On the last day of the week a presentation was made by the participants to upper management. Great excitement was in the room as the results were presented.

"The AKA instructors brought just the right mix and just the right ability to relate with the people. The way the course was delivered made the real difference. The instructors had a unique ability to understand the audience and did a great job interacting with them. It is worth the time and investment to have AKA come in and do the training!"

-Richard Porter, Director of Manufacturing

RESULTS

- 10 supervisors/leads trained in basic leadership skills
- 10 employees were trained in value stream mapping
- Kaizen days resulted in action list of 17 action items
- $216,000 in annual savings

CONTACT US

2413 Nashville Road, B8, Suite 310
WKU Center for Research and Development
Bowling Green, KY 42101

(270)282-7103
www.advantageky.org

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