

## SERVICES TO ENHANCE POTENTIAL: STRENGTHENING WORKPLACE PRACTICES WITH TRAINING

**ABOUT SERVICES TO ENHANCE POTENTIAL.** Founded in 1972, Services To Enhance Potential (STEP) is a nonprofit organization that provides support and services to nearly 1,300 persons with disabilities and other mental health needs in Wayne County, Mich. A major goal of STEP is to increase the number of persons who are employed, self-employed and volunteer in their communities. STEP provides and supports a variety of employment and self-employment options. Based in Dearborn, Michigan, STEP employs 20 full-time employees and roughly 80 persons with disabilities whom they refer to as their clients.

**THE CHALLENGE.** A key client, which comprised 70% of STEP's total sales, requested that STEP become certified to ISO 9001:2015 in order to continue doing business with them. Additionally, after being awarded funding for training through the state of Michigan, STEP was interested in investing in a variety of Lean training for its team members.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Since STEP had never had a Quality Management System (QMS) as part of their operations, they needed assistance with implementing ISO 9001:2015. After working with the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (The Center), part of the MEP National Network™, in the past, STEP knew The Center's experts would provide the guidance they needed to reach compliance. After completing The Center's ISO 9001:2015 Organizational Implementation training, STEP successfully earned their certification. STEP also was able to minimize quality issues with their major customer, going from an average "D" rating on their monthly scorecard to a "B" rating. This has improved their relationship and allowed for the opportunity to gain new work with the customer.

STEP also turned to The Center to bring employees up to speed on Lean best practices. Training covered Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Lean Manufacturing Champion and Value Stream Mapping, with topics tailored to the needs and challenges of STEP's facility. This provided both a refresher and an introduction to Lean, as STEP's team had different levels of experience with lean in the past. All workers left with a deeper understanding of lean concepts and a greater ability to contribute to continuous improvement efforts.

"By gaining knowledge on the QMS, STEP has gained the confidence to take on more difficult accounts. This has helped to increase our revenue stream without the hindrance of quality issues. STEP is still actively looking to add customers even during the COVID-19 pandemic. We wouldn't be at this stage in our business without the help from The Center."

-Tim Kachmarik, Director of Manufacturing

## RESULTS



\$195,000 in new investment



\$150,000 in retained sales



\$50,000 in cost savings



\$25,000 in new sales



5 retained jobs

## CONTACT US



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