

LEAN TRANSFORMATION HELPS PERFORMANCE COMPONENT MANUFACTURER REINFORCE ITS BEST-IN-CLASS COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMERS

ABOUT ZEV TECHNOLOGIES. ZEV Technologies, based in Centralia, Washington, began in a small living room and has since morphed into a leading manufacturer of performance components for pistol, rifle, and AR platforms. However, with such stellar growth also came new challenges, and Impact Washington was able to assist ZEV with overcoming several of those obstacles to continue its success.

ZEV created the first drop-in replacement triggers for Glock. Its initial focus was on creating better products for competitive shooters. As the company grew, so did its customer base, which now includes military and law enforcement. Its products also are available in leading gun stores and ranges. The company also owns its own line of award-winning pistols and rifles and still creates premium upgrade parts for Glock. ZEV's triggers are the gold standard for competitors worldwide.

THE CHALLENGE. ZEV has built its business with the philosophy that anything it makes must be the best in class. However, ZEV was facing inefficiencies, which were triggering delays. The breakdowns at the manufacturing level involved poor information flow and slow material replenishment at work cells. There also were issues with the movement of work in process, from one machining and assembly area to another.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Since 2018, ZEV Technologies has participated in its lean journey with Impact Washington, part of the MEP National Network™. Over the years, several lean engagements have taken place within various departments throughout the company. A former client of Impact Washington referred ZEV Technologies to the experts at Impact Washington. The team at Impact Washington worked with Zev Technologies to utilize a Job Skills Training Program (JSP) Grant to assist with funding the lean engagements. The solution was in-house coaching and training with Lean 101 with live simulation, value stream mapping, lean training and Kaizen implementation. The most focus was on improving ZEV's "Blasting Deburr" processes. The emphasis was to increase "throughput capability," which included a strategy for quickly replenishing materials. Not only did its bottom line and facilities improve, but so did something else – employee culture. Through the lean training, ZEV Technologies now has a team of problem solvers who all are involved in continuous improvement. They have taken ownership of the new processes so they and their company can continue to thrive. Since the training, ZEV has realized an 83% reduction in time, an 89% reduction in person-hours and employees are saving 79% of the time it took searching for parts before Impact Washington taught them a better way.

"The team enjoyed working with Impact Washington. The information and knowledge they provided us has been useful on our operation and continuous improvement efforts."

-Roe Wolf, VP of Team Services

RESULTS



15 new jobs, 15 jobs retained



\$200,000 in new or retained sales



\$150,000 in cost savings



Plant Equipment, Information Systems, Workforce Practices, and Employee Training.

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