

MMEC AND NELSON LABS COLLABORATE ON LEAN TRANSFORMATION GAMEPLAN

ABOUT BIOSCIENCE LABORATORIES. BioScience Laboratories (now Nelson Labs Bozeman) of Bozeman, Montana, has offered FDA-standard product testing in the Gallatin Valley for more than 30 years. Founded in 1991, it started as a small family business in the basement of medical office building. Through gradual expansion of its facilities and testing capabilities, it now offers a broad range of state-of-the-art laboratory services for the healthcare, pharmaceutical, personal care, and medical device markets, and is widely recognized as a leader in topical antimicrobial-product testing. In the last decade, the company has built its own 20,000-square-foot facility with seven specialty labs and expanded its workforce to more than 60 employees. In 2010, the Montana State University College of Business recognized the company as a top Montana Family Business.

THE CHALLENGE. Recently, BioScience Laboratories was acquired by Nelson Labs' parent company Sotera Health. As part of the transition, the company wished to strengthen its alignment with Sotera corporate values, which include a strong focus on excellence and continual improvement. Management wished to introduce Lean and other continuous improvement principles into its operations in order to pursue excellence, and more specifically, improve quality, cost and delivery performance. For help leadership turned to MMEC, part of the MEP National Network™.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Nelson Labs worked with MMEC Business Advisor Alistair Stewart on a plan to lay the foundation for long-term operational excellence. Stewart recommended a full operational excellence/lean bronze training program for the senior lab operations manager (now site leader) to create an OpEx champion, as well as a half-day Lean 101/Lean Lego workshop to begin engaging a larger group of key staff around the potential benefits of these concepts.

Based on the positive response to the initial project, the company has partnered with MMEC for two follow-up projects to develop and implement a lean transformation gameplan. The plan encompasses tools such as value stream mapping and Toyota Kata training to improve operations, as well as supervisory and teamwork assessments to enhance employee performance. To build further capacity, the company now has a continuous improvement manager who has also completed the lean bronze training and is leading the lean transformation initiative. MMEC continues to assist this lean champion as he implements 5S initiatives throughout the Bozeman facility, as well as providing support for 5S implementation in other Nelson Lab locations. In addition, Stewart is providing lean leadership coaching and professional development to seven high-potential leaders in Bozeman.

"I've already recommended this course to several colleagues and peers as I found it extremely beneficial. There are many improvements in queue as a result of what I learned."

-Chelsey Allison, Senior Laboratory Operations Manager

RESULTS



3 created or retained jobs



\$100,000 in cost savings



\$92,000 in new investment

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