

CORE TOOLS AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING OFFER NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR GROWTH

ABOUT MECO CORPORATION. Located in Greeneville, Tennessee, MECO Corp. is one of the largest privately-held corporations in East TN and has been in continuous operation for over 60 years. They have developed a reputation for on-time delivery, exceeding quality standards, and outstanding value. Mecos capabilities include metal stamping, deep draw, CNC machining, welding, powder coating, assembly, packaging, and design support. Retail Products manufactured at MECO include the nationally distributed Americana grills and smokers. MECO also sources, warehouses, and distributes the Stakmore wood folding furniture and Sudden Comfort steel folding furniture.

THE CHALLENGE. Over the past several years, the company has been investing to expand its capacity, capitalizing on a changing economy where speed to market and the ability to rapidly restock matters. With growth came the need to understand and optimize internal processes and to provide support for team building and leadership skills. A long-time Tennessee Manufacturing Extension Partnership (TMEP) client, Mecos contacted TMEP, part of the MEP National Network™, to request assistance in providing vital learning and quality training.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. With funding available through the MEP National Network CARES grant, TMEP assisted Mecos in facilitating an onsite Advanced Product Quality Planning (APQP) workshop and an onsite Vital Learning Communicating Up leadership essentials workshop. The company additionally had supervisors attend several open enrollment style leadership essentials workshops. APQP is a structured approach to product and process design and provides a framework for a standardized set of quality requirements that enable suppliers to design a product that satisfies the customer. The onsite workshop was conducted with a team of seven employees over an eight-hour day and included lecture and hands on activities to reinforce learning. The leadership essentials classes are four-hour classes that also include lecture, hands-on activities and role playing.

"The Center's support was/is critical as we work to address internal issues that came about with the growth of our teams. The challenges faced during and, because of, COVID brought new manufacturing challenges in both retail and the reshoring of the supplier bases. The support for team building and a fresh approach to the APQP processes opened our eyes to new opportunities on how to work together and with our systems. The Center is first on our list to contact when we need a fresh perspective or training support. "

-Eric Kaltenmark, Director of Product Development

RESULTS



\$650,000 in improved productivity



\$300,000 in new or retained sales



\$3,560 in training

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