

INTELLIGENT MATERIALS MANUFACTURER TAKES THE SMART STEP TO TRAIN EMPLOYEES IN SIX SIGMA

ABOUT NOBLE BIOMATERIALS INC. Joel Furey and Bill McNally founded Noble Biomaterials (Noble) in 1997 as an intelligent materials company focused on selling silver fiber technology for its antimicrobial properties. After spending two years developing the technology and conducting clinical testing for use in medical devices, the first commercial success came in the form of a product application Joel and Bill needed: a no-stink antimicrobial sock liner for hiking and skiing. The product ended up winning a Backpacker Magazine Editor's Choice Award. Noble's global headquarters is in Scranton, Pennsylvania, with locations in seven other cities on three continents. It is registered as a medical device manufacturing facility by the U.S. FDA, has numerous 510(k) medical device clearances and is a manufacturer of several EPA-approved antimicrobial products. Noble's products are used in hospitals, burn care centers, military installations and U.S. embassies around the world. Companies like 3M, Ansell, Northrop Grumman, Athleta and the U.S. Army and Special Forces, among others, rely on the mission-critical products manufactured by Noble. In less than 25 years, Noble has grown to a multinational life-sustaining business with three flagship brands: Ionic+, X-STATIC and Circuitex. Noble was also significantly contributed to the country's response to COVID-19 as a sole-source supplier of specialty medical components and antimicrobial products to the U.S. military and healthcare industry.

THE CHALLENGE. Based on previous success with NEPIRC's Six Sigma Yellow and Green Belt programs, Noble contacted NEPIRC, part of the Pennsylvania MEP and the MEP National Network™, about registering employees for the next Six Sigma Green Belt training program in October 2021.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. During this five-session training, which was taught by NEPIRC's Six Sigma Master Black Belt, Noble participants took an in depth look at Six Sigma concepts, along with the roles and implementation approaches that would help them identify Six Sigma execution opportunities. The class also reviewed a variety of real-world improvement project examples that applied the proven DMAIC (define, measure, analyze, improve and control) approach to a specific process. To build upon the classroom material, each participant conducted a Six Sigma Green Belt project of their choosing, which was presented to the class on the last day.

"I've been working closely and relying on NEPIRC for nearly six years now. NEPIRC is my go-to organization for training services. There is no other local company that provides such stellar and robust training services as NEPIRC. NEPIRC's team of employees is not only personable and dynamic, but each member is passionate about the trainings they provide. My company team members who have received training from NEPIRC have not only raved about the training programs but also the NEPIRC instructors."

-Kate Logan, Quality Systems Manager

RESULTS



6 new or retained jobs



\$3,100,000 in new or retained sales



\$80,000 in new products



\$28,000 in improved productivity



\$4,500 in new investment

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