

AMERICAN TOOL COMPANY IS “STRONGER AND FLOWS A LOT SMOOTHER” WITH HELP FROM POLARIS MEP

ABOUT AMERICAN TOOL COMPANY. Phil McCally was 10 years old in 1985 when his family purchased American Tool Company (ATC) in Lincoln, Rhode Island, a quality machining company with demonstrated expertise in turning, milling and drilling. Originally founded in 1918, ATC has produced complex one-off parts for a wide variety of clients. Their primary market is capital equipment makers, “100 miles from Lincoln.”

THE CHALLENGE. Like many who grew up in a manufacturing family, McCally was exposed to the business early on, sweeping the floor at 10 and working in production as a young adult. He secured a mechanical engineering degree and later left ATC for a few years to work at Rolls Royce Naval Marine. Working for this larger company at a higher tier in the Department of Defense (DOD) supply chain, McCally saw which suppliers were doing the best work.

“The shops all had ISO and some other qualifications. So, I felt the first step American Tool Company should take was to get ISO certified, not only to make us more competitive for DOD work but also to make us more crisp as an organization. The quality team could communicate better with customers and with the shop floor.” To make the effort work, American Tool connected with Polaris MEP Project Manager Chris Cinieri. Polaris MEP is part of the MEP National Network™.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Cinieri said the ATC team had several key elements in place to make the effort successful, and a gap analysis identified areas that would need to be addressed for ISO 9001:2015 certification. Cinieri worked together with ATC leadership to help fill those gaps and provided training to the entire ATC team prior to their audit. “Chris came in for almost a year, getting us ready for the first audit,” said McCally. “He became one of us. He was integrated with the machinists and quality control. Chris really went through the whole organization from soup to nuts.”

Polaris MEP helped American Tool secure grant funding from the State of Rhode Island for employee training in quality, lean principles and 5S. This freed up time and money to invest in other improvements, such as an electronic visual metrics board on the production floor, a new lean layout for the quality control area, and an employee training matrix.

American Tool Company passed their ISO 9001:2015 Certification Audit on their first attempt with only a few, easily correctable “minors.” Every part of the organization has benefited. “It opened up the doors for a couple of business opportunities. We’re now doing more and more work with medical firm that we wouldn’t have gotten without ISO.”

“Chris Cinieri is outstanding and we can’t say enough good things about him and the work he did. I know that our organization is stronger and flows a lot smoother since we worked with Polaris MEP.”

-Phil McCally, President

RESULTS



15 jobs retained, 3 skilled worker jobs added



\$150,000 in cost savings



\$50,000 invested in new processes and training



\$120,000 in plant improvements and equipment

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