

LEADERSHIP TRAINING HELPS MAT MANUFACTURING COMPANY GROW

ABOUT M+A MATTING - LAGRANGE. Mountville Mills is a family-owned mat manufacturing company headquartered in LaGrange, Georgia. It specializes in producing high-quality custom designs for commercial, industrial, and residential clients. Since 1963, Mountville Mills has been led by three guiding principles: Do the right thing, do what is best for the customer, and drive improvements and innovation. Mountville Mills merged with Anderson Co. in 2018 to create M+A Matting.

THE CHALLENGE. In 2022, the company was experiencing growth but, simultaneously, changes in the labor market had made it more difficult to recruit and retain employees. Rather than see the situation as a problem, the company saw it as an opportunity to drive improvements and innovation. Mountville committed to becoming an employer of choice in the West Georgia region. As a part of the strategy, the company wanted to promote a positive work environment and instill a sense of pride in employees and in the community. Company leadership organized employee roundtables to listen to employee concerns and collect suggestions to help maintain and improve company culture, while also navigating a period of growth. Leadership training for supervisors and team leads was one of the top suggestions.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Mark Whisenant, director of HR operations, reached out to Derek Woodham, West Georgia region manager at the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech, part of the MEP National Network™, for training recommendations. Woodham introduced him to Andy Helm, GaMEP leadership and strategy project manager, who met with the team, got to know their needs, and developed a program customized for the company.

Helm said, "Many supervisors and team leaders have been promoted from within and have excellent industry knowledge and operational skills, but have not been trained in people-leading skills. We help bridge that gap by giving them a set of tools, common language, and strategies for managing difficult situations."

Over the next year, Helm trained over 100 team members at two different Mountville Mills facilities, in leadership skills including communication, coaching, resolving conflict, and building trust. The classroom training sessions were paired with assignments between sessions to help participants use their new tools in real-world situations. At the beginning of each new session, the group would discuss the assignment from the previous session and share what they learned by putting their training into action.

"GaMEP came in, got to know our business, and then molded their material to fit our specific needs and culture. Their understanding of our team and of manufacturing, helped our leads embrace the training and start to use these tools every day to make positive change in our company."

-Mark Whisenant, Director of HR Operations

RESULTS



New **\$20,000,000** customer



Turnover decreased to **34%** from 58% in one year



Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) went up by **11** points in eight months



Purchased a peer company, absorbing personnel, integrating production, and increasing market share

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