

NETWORKING LEADS TO STRATEGIC BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
AND WORKFORCE TRAINING SUCCESS

ABOUT CAMBRIDGE POLYMER GROUP. Cambridge Polymer Group's (CPG) polymer expertise encompasses a vast range of synthetic and natural polymers along with additives and fillers, and how these materials behave during processing and end-use. CPG has a particular strength in materials used for medical devices and in health care products and the energy storage sector. CPG helps customers in selecting the appropriate polymer for their applications, product development, setting up testing programs for verification and validation, manufacturing issues, and root cause analysis. Their work in patent and product liability cases, coupled with their healthy internal R&D program developing new materials and products, provides a unique resource for clients' projects.

THE CHALLENGE. After many years of growth CPG realized that its traditional structure was no longer adequate for sustained success. The principals at CPG realized that an independent review of corporate structure and assistance in defining a future strategy would be highly beneficial. CPG contacted MassMEP, part of the MEP National Network™, for help and a fresh perspective.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. CPG participated in MassMEP's Value Opportunity Profile Roadmap and from there continued with strategic business planning. President Stephen Spiegelberg shared, "This was a very instructive process that involved company founders and a few key senior individuals. It also was the launch pad for our larger training grants that we started this year where we continued with our strategy training to determine what we really want to do now. We identified many opportunities that we can offer our clients and industry. The question was what we should focus on to enhance growth, what will really make a difference."

CPG was struggling to hire experienced analytical chemists that could provide chemical analyses of client products for regulatory submissions. These chemists are few and far between, so CPG focused on training the people that they had, and they applied for a Workforce Training Fund grant. Two training programs under this grant were for chromatography, and CPG's chromatography team was thrilled to have this formal training and has been asking for more. The training subsequently allowed CPG to advance several staff from junior levels to more advanced positions and helped CPG address the long-time employee shortage.

"MassMEP team input into the submission, administration and implementation of training grants has made it much more streamlined than other grant processes we've gone through, where you're primarily on your own. MassMEP also helped us identify training that would be appropriate and to meet with the trainers to determine if it's a good fit. MassMEP provides regular check ins to see if we are happy with the training and to see if it's working. If we'd been left on our own, I'm not sure that we would have pursued the detailed and time-consuming review and restructure that we now realize is required, and that would have been to our detriment."

-Stephen Spiegelberg, President

RESULTS



\$286,000 in employee wages during training and additional training expense



\$30,000 in cost savings through improved efficiencies; **\$40,000** savings on recruiting costs



\$65,000 invested in instrumentation, new test techniques

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