

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS

ABOUT CONSTRUCTION SPECIALTIES - KENNESAW. Construction Specialties (CS) was founded in 1948 in Newark, New Jersey, as a manufacturer's representative firm and has since become a global manufacturer in specialty building products. This privately-owned family company has multiple locations worldwide, including two in Georgia: one in Kennesaw and one in Fort Valley. Despite being a leader in all of their product categories, CS continues to innovate and refresh their existing products lines.

THE CHALLENGE. CS Kennesaw was expanding distribution activities with products serviced out of other CS locations, which was projected to triple its workload in the coming years. Simultaneously, CS Fort Valley was in the process of launching new products manufactured in Georgia. In the midst of these changes, the client was looking to build a stable workforce and enhanced problem-solving methodology.

To manage these challenges, leadership knew they needed to improve company communications, which had suffered noticeably since employees returned to the office after the COVID-19 pandemic. Departments were isolated and had lost the ability to communicate effectively, which led to inefficiencies. They contacted Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP), part of the MEP National Network™, at Georgia Tech's North Metro Atlanta region manager, Bill Ritsch, for help.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Although the client had started with a lean overview and 5S, they needed a tool to help bring process improvement and communication together, so Ritsch recommended Managing for Daily Improvement (MDI) and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) training and development at the Kennesaw location with GaMEP operational excellence project manager Katie Hines. Then Adam Hayes, GaMEP strategy and leadership development project manager, led an executive leadership and coaching project that utilized the Clifton Strengths methodology.

Through MDI and SOP, GaMEP added structure and became an accountability partner for the existing efforts implemented by Ron DuBose, CS continuous improvement manager. The new MDI system flattens the organizational hierarchy, empowering those closest to the work to make decisions that solve the problems they identify. Gemba Walks have also served as a key implementation tool, and CS expanded these – as well as the other systemic solutions – into the Fort Valley location to realize the benefits that began with the Kennesaw program.

"The MEP is not like a traditional consultant. Consultants sometimes have different motivations, whereas the MEP is looking to improve businesses in the state. They are very present and took the time to understand our organization. The MEP has truly become our accountability partner."

-Mike Danylyshyn, CS Senior Operations Manager

RESULTS



Went from a five-day lead time for orders to a 24-hour lead time.



50% reduction in re-work



Significantly reduced quality errors and delays in shipping, while lowering machine downtime



Doubled production capacity with no change to the number of employees and lines



Created better schedules for employees, due to improved productivity within shorter work hours.

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