

## KATA TRANSFORMATION: OPTIMIZING PROCESSES AND INCREASING PRODUCTION AT WECO MANUFACTURING

**ABOUT ENCO MANUFACTURING CORP.** ENCO Manufacturing Inc., D/B/A as WECO (A subsidiary of ENCO MFG) was founded in 1963 and, since 2013, it is part of the Blanco Group, which operates 11 manufacturing plants and four distribution centers in 15 countries, in the paint, roof sealant, and construction mortar industries. WECO's manufacturing plant in Vega Alta, Puerto Rico, has the most advanced technology in the manufacture of mortars in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, with an installed capacity of 40,000 tons per year. WECO currently has 35 employees.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Taking into consideration all the new potential customers that could be reached in the coming years, it is important that WECO increase the capacity of the plant by 80%, starting with line #2, including a significant reduction in overtime costs. WECO's management team recognized that company staff needed a new way of working on improvement projects.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Knowing the new business challenges that lie ahead, which include intervention in new markets, the optimization of current manufacturing processes, and training employees on continuous improvement topics, WECO contacted Puerto Rico Manufacturing, part of the MEP National Network™. After several conversations with Puerto Rico Manufacturing consultants, WECO decided to begin Toyota Kata trainings and implementation processes in the manufacturing plant. The purpose was to start a systematic way of moving forward to achieve the organization goals. Puerto Rico Manufacturing performance consultants delineated and helped the management team in the construction of a Kata Improvement model for the plant. The 4 phases Toyota Kata model was the main frame to start the continuous improvement journey to obtain better results for the organization.

"Our company has always sought to offer our customers the best products. When we decided to implement the Toyota Kata methodology, we think about optimizing our manufacturing processes and increasing production. However, Toyota Kata methodology taught us to adopt a new way of thinking and acting. Through the coaching cycles we became more aware, the entire team participates in the process, we identify obstacles and experiment with solutions. It takes compromised, and can be difficult especially because we must change our usual style of thinking and acting, but positive results are obtained. The experience with Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension has been one of constant preparation. We started learning about new methodologies, lean manufacturing and Toyota Kata, and ended in a coaching process. With a lot of communication, they have always accompanied and guided us, they have been an essential part of our growth."

-Lizbeth Mercado Rolón, Weco Plant Manager

## RESULTS



**\$42,500** in overtime cost reduction



**31%** increase in production output



**20** employees were trained in Toyota Kata and lean manufacturing



Management supported culture change

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