

## KATA WORKSHOP SETS DIRECTION FOR LEAN CULTURE

**ABOUT DAL-TILE TENNESSEE, LLC.** Dal-Tile, a subsidiary of Mohawk Industries, is the largest manufacturer and distributor of ceramic tile and natural stone in the United States. Founded in 1947 and headquartered in Dallas, Texas, Dal-Tile operates multiple manufacturing facilities and distribution centers across North America. The company offers a wide range of products, including ceramic, porcelain, glass, and metal tiles, as well as natural stone slabs and countertops, catering to both residential and commercial markets. In Tennessee, Dal-Tile has a significant presence, with facilities that play a crucial role in its overall production and distribution network, underscoring the importance of operational excellence and efficiency in this region.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Dal-Tile has always been at the forefront of innovation and efficiency in the tile manufacturing industry. To build on its existing strengths, Dal-Tile's Tennessee facility sought to further enhance its operations by fostering a sustainable lean culture. The leadership team was eager to empower employees with continuous improvement practices, ensuring the company remained competitive and efficient. For help, Dal-Tile turned to TMEP, part of the MEP National Network™.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Dal-Tile attended the TMEP's "Kata: Building Lean Culture to Sustain & Thrive" workshop. This one-day public workshop is part of TMEP's Lean Continuous Improvement series, designed to teach the principles and practices of lean methodology. The course focuses on the improvement kata and coaching kata, which are routines aimed at developing a culture of continuous improvement and scientific thinking. The workshop covered how to understand and document the current condition, teaching employees to observe and accurately describe current processes. It also included defining the target condition, setting clear, measurable goals for improvement, and identifying obstacles by recognizing barriers that prevent achieving the target condition. Additionally, participants learned to conduct experiments, implementing small, iterative changes to overcome obstacles and move towards the target condition. The sessions combined classroom instruction with hands-on activities to ensure practical application of the concepts. The training also included coaching sessions to develop internal leaders capable of mentoring their teams in adopting continuous improvement routines. By integrating these practices, Dal-Tile aimed to cultivate a proactive problem-solving culture, enhance process efficiency, and sustain long-term operational improvements.

**"The value of the knowledge gained from the class is immeasurable. This knowledge has been effectively passed down to our continuous improvement team, resulting in significant benefits to our manufacturing process."**

-Justin Alt, Process Engineer

## RESULTS



\$100,000 in cost savings



\$100,000 in new investment

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