

LEAN IS A “GAME-CHANGER,” SHORTENING FURNITURE PRODUCTION TIME FROM DAYS TO HOURS

ABOUT HIDEAWAY SOLUTIONS. Lancelot Pinnock struggled with a common parenting challenge: his son was small, the kitchen countertops tall. An engineer by trade, Lancelot used his skills to design a unique, foldable stepstool and “Hideaway Solutions” was born in 2017. As Hideaway Solutions grew, Dana Pinnock chose to join her husband and take on the role of CEO. In 2022 the Pinnocks moved production of concealable, foldable furniture out of their home and into a historic building in Bristol, Rhode Island.

THE CHALLENGE. Dana was enrolled in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program at the Community College of Rhode Island. The “10KSB” team and several alumni referred Hideaway Solutions to the Rhode Island Manufacturing Extension Partnership center, Polaris MEP, part of the MEP National Network™. Hideaway Solutions needed expert assistance to meet their goals. First, they wanted to shorten production time and increase output. They next wanted to decrease the number of times per week the assembly team ran out of needed parts. The two final objectives were to improve customer satisfaction and to standardize assembly for new hires.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Polaris MEP Project Manager Nathan Bonds started by observing the Hideaway Solutions process and team movements. He saw that, after years in a cramped garage, the company had spread out to every corner of the new space. The result was many, many extra steps each day. Further, the team lacked clear flow paths for assembly and needed a better understanding of inventory needed for production. Bonds proposed a 5S project. 5S, a fundamental lean manufacturing tool, became a transformational tool for Hideaway Solutions. After classroom training on 5S and lean fundamentals, Bonds took the team through a different “S” each week.

The biggest change of all? Giving up a batch processing approach in favor of single-piece flow with a prime line. “Since we started working with Nathan and Polaris MEP we are down to one-by-one flow, which we thought was impossible. It has been a game-changer,” said Dana. Lancelot praised Polaris MEP 5S training as the foundation for success. “It shortens the assembly line and simplifies it. Everything that we need is there and nothing that we don't need. It's just so efficient.”

Neither Pinnock could hide their satisfaction with the results. First, production time goal was met -- a unit can now be ready to ship in 20 minutes (vs. 2 days). The company is also ready for onboarding new employees.

“The coaching that we received from Nathan Bonds and Polaris MEP has been incredible. It's being surrounded by love. Anytime something comes up, Nathan's interested in helping us solve that problem. It has been just unbelievable, keeping those conversations going and opening up doors. 5S was our introduction to Polaris MEP, but I think the coaching that that we have continued to receive has been worth every penny and every minute.”

-Dana Pinnock, CEO

RESULTS



3 jobs retained



\$1,058,086 in retained sales



\$175,521 in new sales



\$45,750 in cost savings



Single unit now ready to ship in 20 minutes versus previous 2 days

CONTACT US



315 Iron Horse Way
Providence, RI 02908-0000



(401)270-8896



www.polarismep.org

