

TIMBER, TRADITION, AND TRANSFORMATION: MEADOWLARK LOG HOMES' STRATEGIC PATH TO LASTING SUCCESS

ABOUT MEADOWLARK LOG HOMES. Meadowlark Log Homes stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of craftsmanship, with roots stretching deep into the rugged landscapes of Montana and even deeper into the centuries-old Amish tradition of hand-built excellence. Founded by the Miller family in the 1970s, the company began as a modest sawmill where two teenage brothers built their first cabin from scratch. Over time, this humble beginning grew into Meadowlark Log Homes, established in 1993 and now based in Libby, Montana. Today, the company thrives under the leadership of three generations of Millers, employing over 40 people and crafting everything from private homes to pavilions for the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service.

THE CHALLENGE. As Meadowlark Log Homes approached a pivotal leadership transition, the company faced a critical challenge—how to balance the preservation of its deep-rooted craftsmanship while driving innovation and securing long-term growth. Ensuring a smooth transition to the next generation of leadership required not only preserving the company's core values but also enhancing profitability and creating a strategy for continuous improvement.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. To navigate this transformative phase, Meadowlark Log Homes partnered with Rich Turner, a business advisor from the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC), part of the MEP National Network™. Turner mentored the leadership team through scalable strategies that honored Meadowlark's rich legacy of craftsmanship while driving operational improvements and encouraged a culture of innovation. His approach helped position the company for sustainable, long-term success—ensuring that Meadowlark Log Homes will continue to build on its proud heritage, while embracing the future with confidence. Turner led high-impact strategic planning sessions for the leadership team, focusing on operational excellence and continuous improvement. By integrating these efforts with lean manufacturing principles, the resulting roadmap not only targeted day-to-day efficiencies but also established scalable, repeatable processes designed to optimize value streams across all departments. Turner's collaborative approach empowered Meadowlark Log Homes to refine its long-term strategy while embracing new technologies and methodologies. The introduction of lean manufacturing techniques led to immediate efficiencies and established a scalable framework that can adapt to future market needs—underscoring how Montana's industries can thrive by blending tradition with innovation.

"I came away from the strategic planning process with a sharpened vision, mission, core values, metrics, strategies, and tactics for the company. This experience not only positioned us for growth but also aligns with the larger vision of making Montana a leader in innovation-driven craftsmanship and manufacturing."

-Jalon Miller, CEO

RESULTS



42 created or retained jobs



\$1,000,000 in cost savings



\$915,000 in new investment



\$160,000 in new or retained sales

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