

THE NEW GEMBA WAY

ABOUT DEIST INDUSTRIES, INC. Deist Industries, Inc. (Deist) is a holding company for Bucks Fabricating, (a leading manufacturer of standard and specialty roll-off containers and small 2 yard to 10 yard trash dumpsters) and Switch-N-Go, (a manufacturer of interchangeable truck bodies and hoists for Class 3 to Class 7 trucks). Bucks Fabricating operates a 96,000-square-foot facility in Hadley, Pennsylvania, with 79 employees for fabricating and stocking their high-quality products and has just celebrated 40 years in business. Switch-N-Go® operates a 67,500-square-foot facility in Saegertown, PA for manufacturing and stocking products.

THE CHALLENGE. Deist leadership was evaluating improvement needs within their plants and possible training opportunities that would lead to continuous improvement across operations. Leadership's goal was supporting the company's continued growth through increasing profits with improved efficiency and productivity, but they needed implementation assistance and turned to NWIRC, part of the Pennsylvania MEP and the MEP National Network.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. NWIRC's Strategic Business Advisor met with leadership and identified gemba training as a strategic opportunity to improve organization and productivity. Gemba emphasizes using direct observation to identify opportunities for improvement, solve problems, and make informed decisions. At its core, it involves managers or leaders observing operations, engaging employees, and gaining insights into how work is performed. NWIRC's Operational Excellence Specialist Shane Cantrell provided training to transform the organization into a 'gemba' way of thinking. This included training a team of problem-solvers in the basics of gemba and providing coaching and support for the team during their journey. The onsite workplan included four sessions - spread over approximately five weeks - that reviewed fundamentals and included numerous Gemba walks at both facilities, Bucks Fabricating and Switch-N-Go.

The plan included a train-the-trainer focus in order for the company to continue their practice of Gemba walks across the organization to engage employees, heighten quality and safety, and optimize processes. One supervisor noted that he was skeptical of gemba, but Cantrell broke it down in a simplistic way and coached them through the gemba walks. "As a supervisor, it has really helped me engage more with my team and to visualize where we are with our goals. Having action items go up on the board are giving employees more of an ownership and accountability towards the end result," he said.

"We believe gemba will help us retain current employment levels by making us more effective at our current manning levels and by implementing corrective actions to improve safety and quality. Most importantly, gemba will improve retention with better communication on issues, problems, and successes that impact employees in all our organizations."

-Joe Myor, Director of Finance and General Manager

RESULTS



138 retained jobs



\$50,000 in cost savings the first 12-18 months



\$45,000,000 in retained sales



\$40,000 - \$50,000 in cost savings annually due to continuous improvements

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