

## **NH MEP HELPS LATVA MACHINE RECOVER LOST TIME**

*Company Reduces Setup Time by 30 Percent, Increases Sales*

**NEWPORT, NH** – Since 1979, Latva Machine Inc. has been a trustworthy resource for precision CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machining components and assemblies.

Their specialty is complex, tough-to-machine services. Latva has much experience in the military, aerospace, medical and automotive industries and has become one of the premier contract CNC machining companies on the east coast.

Even with good quality controls and standards in place, the company knew there could be improvements made to keep their company growing wisely.

“Our goal was to reduce set up times and learn new concepts that would assist with our continuous improvement program. These days, if you aren’t constantly improving you’re falling behind because the rest of the world is moving ahead,” said Mitch Latva, company president. “We contacted the New Hampshire Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NH MEP) to help us learn new methods and ideas. Our goal was to increase our throughput and become more efficient and profitable.”

Linda Ellis, project manager at the NH MEP, visited Latva to help assess the company’s needs and identify areas of improvement. NH MEP project manager Jane Ely facilitated a team of Latva employees in applying Kaizen methodology for Set Up Reduction and Quick Changeover to their processes. Quick Changeover is a critical component of Lean Manufacturing, and reduces unnecessary activities in set-up and teardown processes, allowing companies to more efficiently change from one product to another.

“NH MEP worked with Latva to facilitate a Set Up Reduction in both the mill and lathe departments of the shop to assist them in improving their current changeover processes” said Ellis. “The NH MEP team video taped existing set up procedures which were analyzed by the group. After viewing the tape, the Latva team implemented ideas from the training to decrease excess time and travel on the shop floor.”

The lean training was a success for Latva. The company has seen increased throughput, and on average, times have been reduced by 30 percent per setup. They have created capacity to take on additional work and have become more profitable. Sales have increased by 10 to 15 percent. Also, those who participated in the training were able to bring that knowledge to other parts of the company.

“The work the NH MEP performed provided everyone with new ideas and insights on how to improve efficiency. The before and after videos were quite enlightening for everyone to see,” added Latva. “It helped us realize the importance of planning ahead and having needed equipment all ready to go. What everyone learned will allow us to be more successful in the future.”

“Latva Machine, Inc. continues to see growth as they keep innovating their production processes. They have instituted a team-approach continuous improvement program to

help them stay competitive in today's hypercompetitive marketplace. The ultimate goal of NH MEP training program is to enable Latva Machine's trainees to transfer the skills they acquired to their colleagues throughout the organization", said Zenagui Brahim, director of the NH MEP.

**About NH MEP**

The NH MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP system is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2,000 manufacturing and business "coaches" whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information, please visit [www.nhme.org](http://www.nhme.org), or phone 1-800-MEP-4MFG.