

Lean Training Enables Jaeger USA's Manufacturing Process To Become More Efficient

Company Background:

Founded in Germany in 1925, Jaeger manufactured hat bands and soon after branched out into reinforcements for the leather shoe industry. After World War II they expanded into other countries. This included the US when in 1963 they partnered with the Textiles Tape Corporation to make narrow fabric tape for the garment industry.

Their partnership then became a joint venture and eventually Jaeger bought out the Textiles Tape Corporation in the early 2000's. They officially became Jaeger USA in 2015.

Located in Rochester, NH, Jaeger USA is a private label manufacturer specializing primarily in waterproofing products and accessories for the construction industry. With over 40,000 square feet of manufacturing space and 40 employees, about 80% of Jaeger USA's business serves the construction industry with the other 20% in shoe and leather.

Situation:

"Integrity is very important to us and quality is number 1 here at Jaeger," said Wink Faulkner, CEO of Jaeger USA. "Jaeger is growing because of the focus we have applied to it."

Wink mentioned there are a series of processes and steps to manufacturing of what they call "tapes." "The problem we were having was in the rewinding and slitting operations," said Faulkner. "As our volumes started to grow that's where the choke point hit." That is when he knew they needed help to find a solution.

Solution:

At his previous company Wink had worked with NH MEP for Lean training. After moving over to Jaeger USA, he resumed receiving the marketing emails NH MEP sends to their clients about their upcoming training programs and services to help manufacturers improve their productivity.

He then reached out to NH MEP, and with the help of a NH MEP Project Manager, an on-site Lean Training and Implementation Program was developed to meet their needs.

The training mentored and educated employees at the client's site in Principles of Lean, Value Stream Mapping, and execution of Kaizen events. The hands-on experience with the mentoring role would create the workforce skills necessary to recreate and expand the Lean continuous improvement culture throughout the organization.

Results:

“We needed to improve the efficiency of everything and at the same time improve cost. The Lean training from NH MEP allowed us to become more efficient by enabling us to get product through that choke point more quickly. With Lean our people do things they are supposed to be doing, without doing things they are not supposed to be doing. Now our employees are thinking Lean and how to make things more efficient,” said Faulkner. “They took the Lean training and continue to use it.”

The following results for Jaeger USA can be credited to having gone through NH MEP’s Lean Training and Implementation Program:

- \$100,000 in new sales over the last 12 months
- Retained sales of \$120,000 over the last 12 months that otherwise would have been lost
- Added 2 new jobs over the last 12 months
- Retained 2 job over the last 12 months
- Increased investment of \$25,000 in plant or equipment over the last 12 months
- Increased investment of \$150,000 in information systems and software over the last 12 months
- Increased investment of \$15,000 in workforce practices or employee skills over the last 12 months
- Avoided unnecessary investments of \$15,000 over the last 12 months

Testimonial:

“NH MEP taught several of us the fundamentals of LEAN, how to apply them and how they benefit the company. Several months later, I still have employees telling me how they look at their process with “LEAN eyes” and try to eliminate the waste from those processes. The training sparked a shift in our culture that is slowly spreading to others. This demonstrates the “long tail” of the training and its benefits. The outside consultant from NH MEP who helped us was engaging and allowed the employees to hear a more objective viewpoint, adding further credibility to the training. We will do more training in the future, for sure!”

Wink Faulkner, CEO of Jaeger USA