

Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (188) View Success Story

Success Story

CIMS ID:	1560
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Client Information

CIMS Client ID:	2739
Client Name:	ILC Dover Inc.
Client ID:	344
CIMS Project/Event ID:	69410
Project Name:	Administrative Practice Value Stream Mapping
Project/Event ID:	LWER1449
Has the client provided approval to use this information in a Success Story?:	Yes

Success Story

Reporting Period:	2005-2
Success Story Title:	ILC Achieves New Levels of Efficiency

Company Profile

ILC Dover is a high-tech manufacturer of gloves for space shuttle astronauts, gas masks for the department of defense, and products used by pharmaceutical manufacturers. The company's markets are divided into approximately even thirds between these three marketplaces. The company employs approximately 350 people. Founded in the 1940s, the company headquarters is in Frederica, Delaware, with facilities in Houston and other locations. It is owned by a venture capital firm.

Situation

ILC customers recognize that the company's products are technically superior, but high costs and frustration with the ordering and fulfillment services create two barriers to signing new contracts and maintaining current customer relationships. ILC had already successfully revamped the production process for its NASA program by seeking advice from the DEMEP in the year 2000, so in November 2004 the DEMEP returned to address the company's pharmaceutical product division. ILC relied on push systems to fulfill orders for the Dover Pack, a popular product used to handle pharmaceuticals. The lead time for this product is 6 weeks. Because no single database captures all the ordering information, ILC Dover relies on 11 pieces of software to handle order taking, filing, accounting, production tracking, fulfillment and shipping. Because the 11 pieces of software don't communicate with one another, employees transfer the information by e-mail, resulting in redundancies and mistakes. Between 30 and 40 pieces of paper are required to complete an order. Five days before the shipment is sent to the customer, an employee begins the paperwork process, which allows time to check for mistakes. Then, a certificate of conformance is created, formatted to the customer's preference. More than 20 certificates exist.

Solution

ILC sought out the DEMEP after success with previous plant improvements, including its space shuttle glove manufacturing process. ILC adopted Lean manufacturing processes, including value stream mapping. ILC also educated all employees on pull techniques. The entire production stream was analyzed by 5S. Value-added steps were identified and the rest were discarded. Switching to a single database allowed the correct data to be input at the time of order. The data is then pulled from the system correctly and confidently. Employees do not need to double-check information at each stage, since it's already in place. Production employees were then educated in pull techniques so regain confidence in their own database system. An operator pulls the information from the database at the point of shipping. Now implemented, the shipping process is going to be standardized across ILC Dover's product lines and for facilities in other locations. Total productive maintenance was implemented on equipment. Backup parts were placed to reduce down time and increase overall equipment effectiveness.

Results

- Customer service representatives can tell customers at the time of order when it will be fulfilled.
- Expected decrease in production lead time from 6 weeks to 4 weeks.
- Reduced the number of compliance certificates for customers from more than 20 individual forms to three that address all customers' needs.
- Engineering change order process went from 63 hours to less than 20.
- Downtime on equipment was reduced from between two and four hours to less than 30 minutes.

Name of Person Providing Testimonial: David M. Harman

Title of Person Providing Testimonial: Manager, Continuous Improvement

Testimonial

"By the DEMEP teaching Lean manufacturing, employees could see that they could do things differently. The DEMEP has been providing them with that message. They have not changed that message. They are not chasing the flavor or the month or the latest business fad."

Record History

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