

MANUFACTacts of South Texas



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Spellman brings NY and Mexican managers to TMAC Meeting in the middle gets everyone speaking the same language

Brownsville... Spellman, the world's largest manufacturer of high voltage power supplies, chose TMAC to provide Green Belt Six Sigma training and certification. The company, which produces high voltage products used in medical diagnostics and airport security, for example, selected 11 leaders from its plants in New York and Matamoros to attend the 2 week course held in Brownsville.

"We've Leaned out the processes over the last 6 years. Now we want to measure deviation for tighter control," says Spellman's Lean Manufacturing

Director John Santillo. TMAC training made economic sense for Spellman, which brought manufacturing, quality, engineering and Lean counterparts from the U.S. and Mexican plants. "We want a common platform. If they speak numerically, it's all the same language," he explains.

Continuing support on implementation questions from Silvia Zubizar-Garza, TMAC Manufacturing Professional, was a big benefit, he notes. "TMAC's been very accommodating by letting us evaluate our real life issues in the course."

With the attendees active in product manufacturing or support, Spellman established goals for each team with 2 projects per plant. Santillo projects a minimum \$50,000 to \$80,000 ROI at each site.

Matamoros plant manager Andres Rocha notes that Lean has helped achieve them greater efficiency. "With ISO 9000 and 14000, our Matamoros operation has been upgraded to a world class facility."

Six Sigma emphasizes cost reductions by reducing variations, achieved by preventive action and strong leaders.



Engineering, manufacturing, and quality managers for Spellman's plants in Hauppauge, NY, and Matamoros found common ground earning Six Sigma Green Belts during a TMAC training presented for them in Brownsville.

TMAC

at UTPA promotes strategic management, technology integration, Lean enterprise and workforce development in cost effective courses and workshops.
Call TMAC at 956-316-7011.

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5S involves Hi-Tech employees in streamlining work areas

Mission....“We get things done, but there’s always a better way,” says Dennis Schultz, corporate human resources manager for Hi-Tech Plastics. To find better ways, the plastic injection molding plant, which produces molded boxes for consumer power tools, brought in TMAC to train every employee-machine operator, clerk, supervisor— in 5S principles.

“We’re giving employees a chance to get involved and find the best way to set up,” he explains. Because 5S focuses on creating and maintaining well-organized work areas, it typically results in greater operating efficiency, higher product quality, and fewer accidents.

TMAC accommodated the plant’s shifts and work load by running multiple classes of 10 -15 employees in short sessions, 2 hours at a time.

The first exercise assigned to every class is to assess the condition of work area: its appearance and functionality. The principles of 5S are Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain, starting with deciding what is essential to an operation and what is not.

At a work station, the class compiles information, maps the area and questions the presence of every item, tool and table, down to cables and stray parts sitting in boxes. Equipped with a check list and red cardboard tags (the simple sort tool), a Hi-Tech team scans the assigned area where a woman is assembling black tool boxes. Items that shouldn’t be there - a broom, an unused floor fan, tool chests - have red tags placed on them. The team finds equipment that needs cleaning or repair and take digital photos of all the items to review them with the TMAC in-



A 5S check list prompts Hi-Tech employees to look at a work area with fresh eyes. Any item not essential to production—box, broom, tool—gets a red tag and moved out.

structor.

The audit soon leads to a cleaner, more pleasant workplace as all items are assigned a place, determined by point of use and frequency. Once all the steps of 5S are applied, employees discover that they no longer spend time hunting, gathering and moving obstacles out of the way (non-value-added time). Organizing parts, equipment, and supplies, establishing standards, and setting up cleaning routines contribute to greater efficiency. Using 5S frees up work space and provides more control over production for the individual and the supervisor.

In Hi-Tech’s front office, Maritza Ybarra says setting things in 5S order on the plant floor is going to make her life easier, too. “I would get suggestions and complaints about

things that should be changed on the floor all the time.” As her office applies 5S principles from the 8-hour course, she too should see a reduction in paperwork and time spent searching for files.

For Schultz, 5S should reveal better ways for Hi-Tech.

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Humanetics seeing results from VSM

McAllenHumanetics is on track to having a record best month ever, according to GM Joe Haynes. Two months after starting TMAC's Value Stream Mapping training, the metal fabricating plant is operating so efficiently that time has become available to take on additional jobs without adding more people or equipment.

"All of a sudden, it clicked," Haynes says. "There's more product flow in one day than we ever imagined."

Only two months ago, skeptics wondered if VSM could make any difference in production. Haynes himself thought perfecting a faster exchange of dies would be the most useful tool, but he's changed his mind.

"Single item flow is the most important thing. In traditional manufacturing, it's not teamwork. Now persons inside a cell try to keep the team flowing with everything balanced," he says. He's witnessing great performances by the teams who sometimes develop a rhythm that doubles the previous production flow.

Team members individually recall that they didn't like the previous status quo: standing



around waiting for work to come to them. Operator Liberato Casas approves of the new steadier pace of production with less of his time wasted standing around, which was common with batch flow.

Humanetics supervisors who completed the VSM course are finding more jobs that can run through the cell because they use the same resources. Haynes notes they are looking at everything in a new light and willing to do things differently now.

"I explain to the guys in the cell that they are at the fore-

front in changing not only how this plant operates. We're changing the whole corporate structure," he says. Humanetics' Director of Manufacturing, at the McAllen plant for the summer, saw the transformation. "Now they're going to implement in Dallas what we learned here. A lot of good things are coming together."

Haynes' sole regret: the crew should have kept journals on the lessons learned, on what works and what doesn't. VSM has made a measurable difference in Humanetics' operations, morale, and profitability.

A good return on investment

Edinburg...An investment in professional training—whether it's the Six Sigma that Spellman paid for or the Value Stream Mapping at Humanetics — should reap definable rewards.

TMAC regularly tallies impact results collected in surveys of local manufacturers and their service suppliers. Of the 16 plants and operations that responded to last year's sur-

veys, 11 reported sales increases that totaled \$5.16 million. The increased sales were attributed to lessons learned in TMAC training. Courses ranged from Project Management and Six Sigma to Logistics, Lean and ISO.

Those same plants reported cost savings of \$1.1 million, thanks to being able to operate more efficiently after ap-

plying the principles taught in TMAC classes.

Valley manufacturers that want to get even better returns on their training investments should check on South Texas College's Skills Development Grant. APICS, Lean, and Six Sigma Courses taught by TMAC's experienced instructors are available at reduced cost.

Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center Training Course Calendar

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|-------|---------------------------|---|
| APICS | September 20 & 27 | Module 1—Basics of Supply Chain Management |
| APICS | September 23 & October 25 | Module II—Master Planning of Resources |
| APICS | September 27 & January 17 | Module III - Detailed Scheduling and Planning |
| APICS | October 16 & 25 | Module IV - Execution and Control of Operations |
| APICS | January 17 | Module V - Strategic Management of Resources |
| ISO | September 23-25 | ISO TS 16949: 2002 |
| ISO | October 15-16 | ISO 14001: 2004 |
| OSHA | November 12 | Warehouse Safety—OSHA Compliance |
| AMA | October 9-10 | Project Management |
| AMA | October 17 | Team Building |
| AMA | November 13-14 | Change Management |
| AMA | December 1-2 | Leadership |

Call TMAC at 956-316-7011 or email tmac@utpa.edu for more information on these and other courses to help your business become more competitive.

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