

## SIMPLE IMPROVEMENTS TRANSFORM BUSINESS

**ABOUT BONNELL ALUMINUM.** Futura Industries manufactures custom aluminum extrusions. It began in 1940 as a manufacturing extrusion company named Colotyle. In 1979 the company moved from Seattle, WA to Clearfield, UT and officially became Futura. A few of Futura's products include: carpet transition metal, Precor treadmill parts, Kenworth handles and spears and Sure power battery housing and electronics components. The company has around 100 employees.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Futura Industries needed a team that focused on eliminating or reducing defects, motion, inventory, transportation, and waiting throughout the plant, and it relied on MEP Utah, a NIST MEP affiliate, to provide the necessary training. When Futura wanted its operators to use the improvement and transformation tools more effectively, MEP Utah helped the team carry lessons from the course to the shop floor.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Two Futura operators attended a World Class Transformation course through MEP Utah, bringing back several useful tools such as A3 problem solving, the Five Whys, and Root Cause Analysis. In A3, employees discovered how to tell their company's story on paper. In Root Cause analysis, individuals practice asking "why" to every question. For example, "Why did John fall yesterday?" "Because the floor was slippery." "Why was the floor slippery?" "Because there was liquid on it." "Why was there liquid on the floor?" The idea is to ask at least five "whys" to get to the root of the problem, since remedying a problem at its source helps the company transform. Futura applied the Five Whys in a value stream that needed a lot of attention and found many ways to improve motion waste and safety. A decision to add metering pumps instead of manually dumping chemicals will result in annual savings, and the improvement came from a simple observation and asking "why" five times. In addition, MEP Utah assigned each operator the task of coming up with a cost savings project to apply the new improvement tools. Futura produced four more hoods per shift, and realized the benefits of moving racks closer to where the operators rack material.

"We were very impressed with how much support we got from MEP to assist with our projects and then follow up to make sure we produced results from what we learned. We will continue to use MEP in the future to keep our company moving forward."

-Brant Bennion, Lean Manager

## RESULTS



\$40,000 annual cost savings



Gained \$12,000 per shift by speeding production



Saved \$8,000 by moving racks on the shop floor

## CONTACT US



100 South 1495 East  
MEK 1121  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112



(801)587-0713



utah-mep.org

