

FOOD SERVICE MANUFACTURER INCLUDES SAFETY & COMPLIANCE TRAINING IN ITS OVERALL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

BACKGROUND:

EMI Industries NJ/Marlo Division utilizes training to maintain its leadership role in the food service industry. Sal Pirruccio and Dino Tommasi, after working together for many years for a major national fabricator of stainless steel equipment, joined forces and formed their own business. Marlo Manufacturing opened its doors in 1971 and was acquired by EMI Industries, an award-winning metal and millwork manufacturer of standard and customized fixtures, displays and equipment for the restaurant, supermarket and convenience store industries, in 2012. Now known as EMI NJ/Marlo Division, the company still delivers the same high quality products, great service and competitive pricing it always has, but is now also part of a multi-regional strategy of five EMI divisions across the country.

Marlo employs fifty-five individuals, has \$9M in sales and has equipment that can be found in national food industry giants such as Panera Bread, Chipotle, Starbucks and Wawa. In addition to major food retailers, EMI NJ/Marlo's equipment is used by the pharmaceutical sector, correctional facilities and the military. An example of the company's innovative problem solving skills is in its equipment created for the US Navy: it had to be designed so that it would easily break down into sections small enough to fit through the narrow door openings found in ships.

CHALLENGE:

EMI NJ/Marlo Division was interested in making some changes in its operations. When NJMEP cold called the company in 2005, an appointment was scheduled with Sal Pirruccio. NJMEP listened to Sal describe his needs, and then explained how the organization could help him. That meeting was the beginning of a long-standing relationship that helped Mr. Pirruccio and his colleagues grow the company. NJMEP first completed a Quickview Assessment that laid the foundation for the overall improvement plan. The first project introduced Value Stream Mapping, a Lean manufacturing process that helps a company identify waste.

After a number of individual projects, Joe Carotenuto met with Chris Rapciewicz, EMI NJ/Marlo's Director of Operations, to design a comprehensive plan to move the company forward. Marlo's supply chain consists of many local manufacturers and fabricators and its workforce is made of both seasoned workers (one of which has been with the company for 30 years) and young employees who are learning the various trades necessary for the manufacture of its products. Marlo's improvement and growth initiative will have a multiplier effect—jobs for other NJ businesses and improved skill levels for its workforce.

SOLUTION:

With the assistance of NJMEP, EMI NJ/Marlo applied for and received an NJDOL training grant to fund its Lean transformation. In addition to the Lean work, EMI NJ/Marlo needed to conduct OSHA Safety & Compliance Training because the company did not have an up to date Hazcom plan, the necessary PPE Assessments as required by OSHA or an Emergency Contingency Plan.

To accomplish this objective, NJMEP and Marlo worked together to:

- Create an effective Hazcom Program: An effective program requires management's involvement and the inclusion of employees in safety and health decisions. It also requires rigorous worksite analysis to identify hazards and potential hazards. Stringent prevention and control measures are also required in the program as

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well as training. It would also address hazards that may or may not be regulated by government standards.

- Assess EMI NJ/Marlo's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Needs
- Prepare an Emergency Contingency Plan

NJMEP also provided forklift training which resulted in Certification for the drivers that participated in the training.

RESULTS:

EMI NJ/Marlo employees received training specific to their job responsibilities: All employees received OSHA training. Additional training included Lean/Six Sigma for factory floor workers and Administrative Lean for Office personnel. As a result of the Lean, OSHA Safety and Compliance training initiative Marlo personnel:

- Learned the importance of an organized workplace (5S) and other Lean principles and their relevance to OSHA compliance
- Take the initiative in identifying potential issues and recommending solutions, for example, a new laser machine required a specific type of safety glasses, better gloves were identified and recommended and they adapted new safety measures in regard to forklift operations
- Were able to identify and develop a process for equipment maintenance that enabled employees to monitor and capture time spent on repairs, do a cost benefit analysis and when necessary budget for replacement equipment
- Know that in the event of an emergency, there is a plan in place that will address any needs that may arise

The company reported in a recent NIST Survey that as a result of the programs implemented, EMI NJ/Marlo:

- Achieved a cost savings of \$240,000 as a result of improved processes
- Invested \$100,00 in new processes
- Was able to retain 6 employees that could have lost their job and hired an additional 6 workers
- Invested \$1.2M in a new piece of "Lights Out" equipment that will enable Marlo to be more efficient in its manufacturing process by redirecting its experienced employees to other areas within the company
- Saved \$46,000 in workforce training costs as a result of the NJDOL investment in the company and invested \$130,000 in workforce practices

When asked about working with NJMEP, Mr. Rapciewicz explained: "EMI NJ/Marlo Division has been positively impacted by our longstanding relationship with NJMEP. The organization is able to regularly provide solutions to the challenges we face. Whether it's assessing our needs, developing a strategy to address the challenges or providing resources that are able to engage our workers and communicate clearly with them, NJMEP always delivers. We are currently discussing R&D Tax credits. NJMEP explained why they apply to our processes and how we can utilize them in improving our bottom line. That's what they do, help us do better."

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