

LEAN TRAINING LEADS TO WAVES OF POSITIVE CHANGE FOR FITNESS EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER

COMPANY PROFILE

True to its name, the WaterRower machine simulates the natural dynamics of a boat moving through water. Its unique WaterFlywheel design generates a smooth, even stroke that captures the true aesthetics of on-water rowing. Each piece is stylishly designed to create a beautiful fitness furniture centerpiece.



Founded in 1988, the company's manufacturing headquarters moved to Warren, RI in 1996. This facility currently employs more than 130 employees.

SITUATION

At the peak of the pandemic, with the influx of new workers and to keep up with increased global demand, the focus was to train quick and maximize production. Unfortunately, this is when inefficiencies crept in. There was a lot of wasteful moving; workers bounced back and forth to get specialized tools and materials needed for production, and product frequently went from the woodshop to the main floor and then back to the woodshop for rework.

Lancaster and WaterRower CEO, Peter King, heard about Polaris MEP from another Warren manufacturer, Taylor Box

SOLUTION

The manufacturer first dipped its toe in the Lean Manufacturing waters by putting eight internal champions through an Introduction to Lean Principles workshop in February of 2021. Classes were hybrid due to COVID.

Seeing immediate success, WaterRower invested in on-site training for an additional 10 employees in June. To date, training has included:

- Group training in Lean principles
- Group Direct Observation /report-out training
- Implementing several iterative Lean exercises and experiments

IMPACTS



\$1,000,000 in retained sales



2 new jobs added



Investments of \$100,000 in plant and information systems



Investment of \$500,000 in new processes and employee skills



\$10,000 in savings in the first year

To learn more, read the full Success Story at:

bit.ly/41t8PbR



"We've definitely improved procedures and processes. We've formalized and streamlined processes."

Jill Lancaster
Director of HR,
Admin & Finance



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