

NEWS RELEASE



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For immediate release

GETTING LEAN . . . ONE PROCESS AT A TIME

Lean Learning Center Kaizen Camp helps train leaders to systematically reduce waste

Novi, Mich, Nov. 3, 2003 -- No matter what the economic environment, any company can benefit by cost reduction, productivity increases, quality improvements and waste reduction. But, when you have a corporation consisting of multi-discipline areas that vary from manufacturing to human resources to engineering, it's hard to know where to begin, how to tie it all together, and how to come up with the budget to support the entire effort.

For Novi-based Polynorm Automotive - North American Operations -- a Tier 1 supplier to the automotive industry specializing in development and production of Class-A body panels and components -- the answer is . . . one step at a time. In conjunction with the Lean Learning Center, Polynorm Automotive has functioned as the host company for the Center's Lean Kaizen Boot Camp class

Participants of this five-day class learn how to systematically apply -- one department or operation at a time -- lean concepts and tools for process improvement. By participating in a kaizen at an actual manufacturing facility such as Polynorm Automotive, attendees receive hands-on training and learn how to identify a project, plan a team workshop, understand the current state, establish an ideal state, and create and execute an action plan for improvement.

Host companies, in return, receive the analysis and action plan that they can then use to affect process improvement. “We agreed to host a Lean Learning Center Kaizen Boot Camp class that took place last April,” says Mark Carie, director of Lean Systems for Polynorm Automotive. “At that session, the group studied our welding and assembly area. At the end of the class, we were presented with an action plan, which we have taken to heart. We applied it and we have seen tangible improvements, such as reduced inventory levels, shorter lead times, less overtime and increased productivity.

“An added benefit is that we’re finding this an effective way to sell the value of lean transformation to our work force that is consistent with our company’s lean rollout.”

Polynorm Automotive was pleased enough with the results that it agreed to host the Center’s next Lean Kaizen Boot Camp in November. In this session, students will be evaluating Polynorm’s ecoat process.

“Although effective lean transformation is dependent upon enterprise-wide deployment,” says Lean Learning Center partner Jamie Flinchbaugh, “kaizens help us get there by providing quick and dramatic improvements to a particular process or operation. By providing real-world training, we create lean experts who can then take this experience back to their companies and apply it to their lean implementation efforts in a continuous and orderly manner.”

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Editor Notes:

Lean Learning Center

The Lean Learning Center, founded in 2001 to address the gaps and barriers holding companies back from lean transformation, is run by lean manufacturing and consulting industry veterans Dennis Pawley, Andy Carlino and Jamie Flinchbaugh. With almost 1000 attendees in two years, the Center has served a variety of industries and customers such as Boeing, DaimlerChrysler, Detroit Edison, Land O’ Lakes, Wise Foods, Visteon, and more. In tandem with corporate partner Achievement Dynamics, a nationally-recognized lean principles and practices consulting firm, the companies provide a seamless array of lean transformation services. To request a curriculum brochure or for more information, call 248-478-1480 or visit www.leanlearningcenter.com.

For more information about Polynorm Automotive – North America, visit:
<http://www.polynorm.com/locations/novi.asp>