OOE Success Story

Continuous Improvement and Energy Efficiency at Automotive Manufacturer

Customer: HFI

Problem / Challenge: HFI has a foam-in-place headrest mixed-model production area, along with warehouse inventory, office space, and shipping and receiving areas. The company was projecting a growth in demand that needed to be met without adding shifts or capital-intensive molding equipment.

Proposed Solution: HFI utilized the assistance of UAH to work with a team of HFI personnel to identify and implement improvements that result in throughput and energy savings increases.

Outcomes:

Kaizen Event A cross-functional team of HFI personnel was trained in the principles of lean enterprise and practical energy. The team then observed the current foam-in-place operation and identified opportunities for improvement. Throughout the course of the event, ideas were tested and changes were made that improved flow and reduced the labor required per part so the increased demand could be absorbed with existing resources.

Energy Efficiency UAH identified other energy saving opportunities. Lighting upgrades to more energy-efficient fixtures along with repairs were quantified, as well as verifying the savings for upgrading the air compressor. Additionally, the savings for converting some production tools from air-driven to electric was also calculated.

Impact The UAH team successfully facilitated the improvement event resulting in productivity gains from 5-10%, improved work flow layout in the FIP area and reduced material handling time. Also, the event identified potential recurring energy savings by upgrading lighting, utilizing alternative tooling and upgrading the air compressor.

"UAH helped us open our capacity for increased demand. Given a goal, the team applied lean principles and made the improvements necessary to achieve it."

- Nick Williams, General Manager