

# Success in **Workforce**

*Drywall manufacturer improves workplace culture and employee engagement through workforce development trainings.*

## **TRIM-TEX**



150 Employees



Lincolnwood, Illinois



[www.trim-tex.com](http://www.trim-tex.com)

### **SITUATION**

Trim-Tex was determined to break away from the traditional “command and control” manufacturing mindset and create a more collaborative and engaged work environment. With over 50 years under its belt as the leader in drywall accessory manufacturing, Trim-Tex knows a thing or two about quality and the importance of continually improving business areas to maintain competitiveness.

The organization has been on a journey to become a lean manufacturer, with a lean mindset. To achieve this, they wanted to focus on culture and people first, then structure around that. Leadership knew they needed engaged employees who can continue to improve the business.

According to Trim-Tex Plant Operations Manager George Sobota, “At the managerial level, it was challenging for some managers to effectively offer improvement ideas because they were not fully in touch with the shop floor.”

A change was imperative.

### **SOLUTION**

Understanding that an engaged workforce and a positive company culture with open communication where issues can be voiced and addressed is where their success begins, Trim-Tex has been diligently investing in improving their workforce. With a long-standing relationship with IMEC, it made sense to engage the experts in order to move further on their lean journey – to adopt a lean mindset.

The transformation began with an Employee Engagement Survey, which revealed their biggest opportunities for improvement – they needed to upgrade their leadership and supervisory training in order to cultivate an open, positive work environment. They then completed the Building a Competitive Workforce of the Future training, partially funded by Chicago Workforce Funder Alliance. This training focused on educating leaders and bringing them to a better place to lead the company into the culture Trim-Tex was aiming for.

Upon reflection, Sobota said, “The impact of this program on our supervisors has been tremendous. Their approach to their teams has been very positive and it has shown throughout the plant. Employees are more confident and trusting of management.”

Once Trim-Tex recognized and fulfilled the need for leadership training, Employee Manufacturing Essential Skills training through Tooling U was the next logical step in achieving the company’s goal. They realized some leaders in various departments were being overtasked and overburdened, thus impacting their ability to effectively supervise and lead their teams. With the employee skills training, employees had the opportunity to learn skills that would relieve the managers from certain duties, enabling those employees to elevate themselves and grow.

“This was a fantastic introduction of a tool that could be further applied to our organization,” said Sobota. “The fact that this was online and an individual can take this at their pace was very helpful.



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Overall, these trainings are helping those at the supervisory or group leader level grow and cultivate a safer, more positive atmosphere.

## RESULTS

Since undergoing these workforce improvement trainings, Trim-Tex has noticed an incredible response from the employees. The most notable change is the boost in company morale. The workforce is more engaged – individuals are being more assertive in how they do their day-to-day work, and more innovative ideas are starting to surface. Overall, business is more resilient than ever before, and they are able to adjust to market conditions and changes faster and more effectively.

These trainings allowed for growth on all levels, resulting in a more well-rounded, flexible workforce. Responsibilities that were hindering managers and supervisors from focusing on leadership-level tasks are now handed off to a level down: from the manager to the supervisor, and from the supervisor to the group lead. Now, responsibilities get pushed to where they need to live, enabling managers and supervisors to make better and faster decisions while focusing on their core duties. It is safe to say that Trim-Tex is one step closer to becoming a lean manufacturer.

- Improved Employee Engagement
- Improved Company Culture
- Improved Productivity

“ Our investment in people goes hand-in-hand with our success. ”

*-George Sobota, Plant Operations Manager*



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