COMPANY PROFILE: Located in Grandville, Mich., Digital Tool & Die, Inc. (www.digitaltooldie.com) designs and fabricates world-class sheet metal dies for the automotive and appliance industries. Founded in 1989 by brothers Mike and Dennis Gill, the company has grown to 69 employees. With quality prioritized in everything they do, Digital Tool & Die works to create custom progressive and transfer dies, as well as the highest quality custom specialty tooling, all while adhering to tight tolerances and time constraints.

SITUATION: Because Digital Tool & Die has grown organically since its inception, it was lacking an infrastructure and operations system for measuring key metrics. And, with no standard operating procedures or written/trained processes in place, productivity and efficiency were declining.

To position the company for continued success, Owner Mike Gill contacted the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center – West (The Center-West) to explore training opportunities for his employees.

SOLUTION: To accomplish their company goals, Digital Tool & Die’s financial performance first was assessed using The Center’s proprietary Transformation Planner. Following this analysis, the results showed that Digital Tool & Die was underperforming in Cost of Goods Sold (COGS), Gross Margin and Capacity.

The Center-West worked with West Michigan Works and Grand Rapids Community College to provide further assessment of Digital Tool & Die’s strategic needs. With support from The Center-West, Digital Tool & Die implemented a Lean manufacturing-structured operating system with a problem-solving foundation. Employees then earned certifications for their critical processes and equipment. Further, as the nature of work performed at Digital Tool & Die requires a high level of skill, an apprenticeship training program was implemented to support the future operations of the company.

RESULTS:
• New Jobs: 1
• Retained Jobs: 68
• Culture Change: Employees were a driving force behind the process improvements made to the company.

“The training we received is invaluable for the growth that we will achieve in the next three to five years.”
DENNIS GILL
Owner

SUSTAINING ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH & SUCCESS

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