



## Success Story: LioChem

### An Ongoing Partnership for Long-Term Success

LioChem was established in Conyers, Georgia, in 1988 as part of the Toyo Ink Group. The Japanese-owned company merged Japanese technology with American manufacturing concepts to produce high quality plastic colorants, printing inks, and coatings. Their products are used in a variety of applications including automotive, packaging, furniture, construction, and sporting good products.

#### Since beginning work on the project, LioChem has:

- Completed all four steps of the Organizational Excellence assessment process including: Self-Assessment, Interviews, Facility Tour, and Review/Reporting.
- Identified metrics to help them track and measure 5S progress, operational cost, risk management, and other areas.
- Improved communication through Gemba walks, employee meetings, 5S reviews, and expansion of management reviews.
- Written a 3-year midterm plan and long-term vision statement, which addresses market diversification, succession planning, investment in resources, and other key objectives.  
Kicked off implementation of a global SAP platform.
- Learned a process for benchmarking that works even within their niche market, something the company had struggled with over the years.
- Explored new opportunities for business diversification with plans to start producing one of the new product lines within one year.

## »» Situation

LioChem has always worked hard to stay on the cutting edge of their industry, but in 2017, after nearly 30 years in business, the leadership of the company felt that it was time to take a step back and evaluate their day-to-day operations to help them find opportunities for improvement. It was necessary to realign the organization with key objectives following recent years of high competition, economic recovery, and diluted resources. In addition, they wanted to begin to look forward to the next generation of products and solutions to help the company grow.

Over the years, LioChem has formed a close relationship with Georgia Tech. Their General Manager of Inks and Coatings, Terry Hall, is a Georgia Tech alumnus and first introduced the company to the multitude of resources available to manufacturers. The management team at LioChem has since taken advantage of Georgia Tech's co-op student program, regulatory and ISO consulting, professional education, and hands-on projects completed by the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech. The General Manager of Plastic Colorants, Hudson Moody, has additionally worked to connect R&D from the Japanese parent company, Toyo Ink, with access to the latest research and technology through the Institute for Electronics and Nanotechnology.

After so many successful years working together, Ronnie Robertson, GM of Administration, said it was a "no brainer" to call Larry Alford, GaMEP south metro Atlanta region manager, and ask for help defining their goals for a sustainable business model and creating a strategic plan for the future.

## »» Solution

Alford recommended the company use the Organizational Excellence assessment and framework to help them as they began to prepare for future growth. The assessment allows companies to analyze each aspect of their business and how their improvement efforts could be best aligned for success. Then, the framework uses the information gathered in the assessment to make recommendations related to the four key pillars of Organizational Excellence: Business Health, Organizational Alignment, Leadership Development, and Forward Thinking.

Alford and project manager, Mike Stonecipher, then began working through the steps of the Organizational Excellence assessment process with the company.

Robertson said, "Larry and Mike probably could have walked right in and told us what we needed, but it made a big difference that we realized it ourselves through the assessment process."

After talking with all levels of management and evaluating data throughout the plant, Alford and Stonecipher put together a report with recommendations throughout the four pillars of Organizational Excellence.



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