



Success Story: Imerys

Mining for Solutions

Imerys is a mineral processing company with over 270 sites globally. Founded in 1880 as a nickel ore extraction and processing operation, the company grew over the next 100+ years to include other types of mineral extraction and processing including calcium carbonate, which is currently produced at its Marble Hill, Georgia location. The mineral is used as a component of products in a variety of industries which include applications in building construction such as flooring, adhesives, roofing, paint, and concrete products.



Since beginning their work with the GaMEP, Imerys has:

- *Delivered an 11% reduction in costs in the Drill and Blasting Department.*
- *Increased productivity by 30% in Roof Bolting operations.*
- *Found opportunities for an estimated energy savings of \$100,000 per year through changes in equipment usage.*
- *Improved recovery by 5% in the Flotation Department.*
- *Saved over \$500,000 overall, across all projects and departments.*

»» Situation

Gerardo Salinas, performance industrial manager at Imerys, wanted to find a way to give high performance employees the tools that they needed to help the company improve daily operations and find opportunities for cost savings through a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt program. He reached out to GaMEP for assistance and was connected with Ade Shitta-Bey, GaMEP project manager, for training and coaching.

»» Solution

The ten-person implementation team first went through a five day training course on the Lean Six Sigma problem solving methodology, taught by Shitta-Bey at their facility, to learn the five steps of the DMAIC process: Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control. In addition, the team created project charters, which identified specific goals and opportunities. Projects were then assigned to team members to deploy over the course of the next five months to help the company find cost savings, lower cycle times, and improve quality.

During the project phase, Shitta-Bey coached the team via a series of regularly scheduled meetings. She reviewed financial information, analyzed collected data, and discussed the process with team members as they were going through each step of their project.

The company trained three different teams through three rounds of projects in different facilities and departments throughout the company.



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