

\$66 million in new and retained sales  
\$22 million in new investments  
476 jobs created or retained

**Oregon MEP** (OMEP)'s vision is to be the principal source of high performance business and technical assistance for Oregon's small to mid-sized manufacturers and the partner of choice for the economic development community. Their emphasis on transforming companies goes beyond the factory floor to create a ripple effect of positive sustainable impact on the business, the workforce, and the community.

OMEP consultants provide Lean Enterprise training and implementation assistance to a wide variety of industry sectors. They collaborate with the national network of Manufacturing Extension Partnership resource centers in over 400 locations nationwide, providing integrated and standardized services so manufacturers can benefit from industry driven best processes and practices.

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\* Impacts are based on clients receiving service in FY2010

# CLIENT SUCCESS: CASCADE STEEL ROLLING MILLS

*“OMEPs assistance has played an important role in achieving the significant gains we have accomplished over the past few years. We appreciate their attention to improving company culture along with company practices and feel that they genuinely care about our success.”*

Michael Layfield, Director of Operations

## Cascade Steel Rolling Mills increase sales with Help from Oregon MEP

Founded in 1968, Cascade Steel Rolling Mills is a state-of-the-art steel manufacturing facility that takes recycled metal and turns it into high-quality finished steel products. Located in McMinnville, OR the electric arc furnace (EAF) mini-mill produces a wide range of hot rolled products such as reinforcing bar (rebar), coiled reinforcing bar, wire rod, merchant bar and other specialty products and employs 400 people.

### *Situation:*

Cascade Steel requested that OMEP, a NIST MEP network affiliate, perform a company assessment of business practices. As a result of this assessment, Cascade management determined the company would benefit from adopting Lean Enterprise strategies and saw an opportunity for market differentiation by offering shorter product lead time. Based on those recommendations, Cascade launched an initiative to cut the lead time of rolling mill campaigns in half. Successful in its mission, the initiative led to a significant positive impact in customer satisfaction and a dramatic reduction in inventory carrying costs; however, some difficult challenges for operations ensued. To overcome those operational challenges, Cascade Steel sought the continued support of OMEP.

### *Solution:*

Cascade Steel was awarded an Employer Workforce Training Fund grant, and based on their previous experience, chose OMEP to assist the company in applying Lean methods and philosophies to the operational challenges uncovered in previous initiatives. OMEP provided training, guidance, coaching and implementation support. These actions included Lean Orientation training for all employees, implementation of efforts to reduce changeover time, efforts to reduce scrap, and the development of a formalized 5S (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain) program. Additionally, OMEP helped develop a web-based communication tool for employee suggestions and formalized tracking and implementation of ideas.

### *Results:*

- \* Increased sales of \$12,000,000.
- \* Cost savings of \$1,000,000.
- \* Retained sales of \$2,000,000.
- \* 50% reduction in lead times.

Increased sales  
by \$12 million

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