

GR Spring & Stamping's Continuous Improvement Program Achieves Annual Cost Savings of \$1.2 Million



At a Glance:

- GR Spring & Stamping employees generated a total of 8,450 implemented continuous improvement ideas.
- The innovative program cost the company \$70,000 to manage and resulted in annual savings and cost avoidance of \$1.2 million.
- The stamper puts into action its mission of “Profits through continuous improvement, while having fun during the process.”
- The improvements in manufacturing processes reduce waste and improve the bottom line.
- The continuous improvement program's goal is to make small, incremental improvements in five main categories: Quality, Cost, Delivery, Safety and Morale.

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About GR Spring & Stamping

A supplier to the automotive industry, GR Spring & Stamping (GRSS) is acknowledged as an industry leader in the manufacturing of metal stampings, value-added assemblies, springs and slide-formed products.

Continuous Improvement Through the Enterprise

Employees have a shared vision and everyone is focused on contributing ideas to promote continuous improvement for a basic and fundamental reason – they believe it is the difference between thriving in a competitive marketplace and not surviving.

Expectations are that every employee has valuable input and suggestions for improvement that benefit the company and ensure its continued success.

A Competitive Market

GRSS has seen many competitors succumb to market pressures from foreign competition, downturns in the economy and the tumult of automotive OEMs increasing supplier requirements. Since the business began as Grand Rapids Spring & Wire in 1960, the mindset that continuous improvement is necessary for the company to survive has been institutionalized into its day-to-day work processes.

GRSS is an innovator that leverages technology to work as efficiently as possible, while also expecting and encouraging process improvements from every member of the team. The program that GRSS has developed is called the World Class Idea (WCI) program, and it was responsible for an impressive 8,450 improvements during a 12-month period.



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How it Works

Employees at GR Spring & Stamping use Plex Cloud ERP for all of its ERP functions, “from the shop floor to the top floor.” To submit a suggestion, the associate saves it via a Plex dialogue box. This dialog box enables easy entry of a suggestion, provides a drop-down selection defining whether it is a cost-saving improvement, or related to morale, safety or other issues. It includes a dialog box for a brief description and includes reference to a financial incentive.

All suggestions are reviewed by supervisors on a weekly basis to determine if they qualify and to ensure no duplicate ideas are entered. The employee is compensated for each suggestion. Each World Class Idea generates a \$7 payment with \$1 entered into a Christmas fund drawing at the end of the year, \$3 given to the employee and \$3 entered into a fund which is distributed at a company meeting every six weeks.

WCI

All suggestions become property of your employer

Employee: Dan Armock

Employee:

Suggestion:

Location:

Suggestion Type:

Response:

- Cost-saving
- Delivery-improvement
- Environmental Improvement
- Morale Improvement
- Quality improvement
- Safety improvement

Describe verification procedure which assures that the Continuous Improvement has been implemented:

Suggestion Status:

Suggestion Date:

Total Points Awarded: **1**

Total Amount Awarded: **\$3**

Amount Saved: \$

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Creating a WCI Culture

GRSS understands that it's necessary to encourage WCIs by frequently reminding employees of their importance to the company's fiscal health. Even small gains are celebrated and the staff is encouraged to think about improvement possibilities from the moment they enter the door.

"The road to success is not doing one thing 100 percent better - it's doing 100 things one percent better."

There aren't many improvements that will result in savings of \$100,000, but you can eventually achieve that level of savings when \$5 to \$10 savings are added up during the year. The company reminds everyone that the road to success is not doing one thing 100 percent better – it's doing 100 things one percent better.

World Class Ideas from Employees

Jim Z

- Wrote an application to receive a \$15,000 state training grant for operational excellence. **(Cost Savings of \$15,000)**

Joe B / Bill H

- Found an old welder in storage purchased used for \$6,000 vs. new for \$60,000. **(\$54,000 Cost Avoidance)**

Alan W

- Increased the run speed from 45 spm to 60 spm on a machine press. **(Delivery & Cost)**

Ben J / Loan L

- Added a guard to a machine weld fixture. Helped keep sparks from hitting the operator. **(Safety)**

Brad R

- Put the front tool timing on the machine setup sheet. Eliminates need to estimate timing and enables quicker setup. **(Cost Savings)**

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A World Class Organization

Establishing and nurturing the World Class Ideas program at GR Spring & Stamping helped the company achieve world-class results.

The company has received many awards from their customers and created an environment where employees are part of the team and everyone contributes to encouraging excellence in the workplace.



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About Plex

The Plex Manufacturing Cloud is the first and only cloud ERP built to meet the tough requirements of today's manufacturers. Hundreds of innovative companies, across industries including aerospace and defense, food and beverage, and motor vehicles, rely on Plex to operate their manufacturing businesses and generate profit from every inch of the plant floor. With insight that starts on the production line, Plex helps manufacturing companies see and understand every aspect of their business, enabling them to lead in an ever-changing market.