

## Frank Murken Products Transforms Schenectady Facility into World-Class Manufacturing Operation with Help from CEG's Business Growth Solutions

### Company Profile:

A leading manufacturer of custom gaskets and industrial/hydraulic hoses and distributor of specialty chemical products, Tattersall Industries, LLC doing business as Frank Murken Products (FMP) employs 21 people and has been operating in Schenectady for more than 50 years. The company has a long history of serving customers throughout North America, Europe and the Middle East in the aerospace, construction, transportation, pharmaceutical, energy, chemical and semiconductor industries. FMP maintains the highest standards with activities performed in conjunction with their Quality Management



Before

Systems (ISO 9001:2008 and AS9100C) certification requirements.

### Situation:

When a major customer presented FMP with an opportunity to be certified at its highest level for quality and reliability, President and Owner John Tattersall thought his company was well-positioned to achieve such premier supplier status. FMP conducted a self-assessment of its business processes and 30,000-square-foot facility

including three production areas, a receiving/shipping area and a retail store. While their internal review indicated a state of probable readiness, the actual customer audit revealed areas where further improvements were needed in order to achieve the targeted certification.

*"As you get used to things, you believe they are okay and optimized,"*

said Tattersall, who acquired FMP in 2008.

### Solution:

Fortunately, while at another company, Tattersall had worked with the Center for Economic Growth (CEG) so he reached out to Louise Aitcheson, Director of Business Development with CEG's Business Growth Solutions (BGS) unit. Recognizing the opportunity to leverage Lean Enterprise Methodologies and anticipating the production capacity that would be created, she suggested a two-pronged approach to drive both productivity and growth. CEG assigned Tom Bell, a Project Director for Technology Services to the productivity side of the project and Tattersall tasked Bell with the goal of reorganizing his facility's Gasket Production and Receiving/Shipping areas to improve work flow, increase capacity (with existing resources), better utilize floor space and reduce overall lead times. On the growth side, Tattersall and his management team worked with Michael Lobsinger, Center Director, and Louise Aitcheson to align as a team and refine their growth strategy.

To achieve these goals, FMP took advantage of several BGS services between May 2015 and February 2016, including:

- A two-day staff training on the **“Principles of Lean Manufacturing.”**
- A **Value Stream Mapping** analysis of the Gasket and Hose product families.
- A **new layout** for Gasket manufacturing area.
- Implementation of various **lean methods** in the Gasket production and Receiving/Shipping areas.
- A **Revenue Throughput Program** which entailed a thorough analysis of each business function along with a focused series of strategic sessions that aligned the management team for future growth

With more than three decades of management-level experience at manufacturers such as General Electric, Dow Chemical and Lydall, Tattersall noted of his participation in the BGS services, “I’m an old dog and I like to learn new tricks”.

Overall, FMP invested more than \$93,000 in plant equipment, information systems, and fees for engaging with CEG BGS – their local MEP Center. With grant funding to offset the work with the CEG, FMP’s cost savings on their investment totaled **\$28,900**.

### Results:

The CEG BGS-guided changes helped FMP attain its customer’s special supplier status and much more. A National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) survey found that by the second quarter of 2016, BGS support had helped FMP realize \$200,000 in increased sales and \$1.4 million in retained sales. FMP created one job, retained 21 positions and experienced \$10,000 in cost savings in addition to the savings derived from the grant funding FMP received to offset the costs of the project.

But the benefits BGS afforded FMP did not end there. The detailed process analysis completed as

part of the lean enterprise initiative enabled FMP to secure additional capacity through improved flow and value-add work content. The company entered 2017 realizing it had that further capacity and its management team is now striving to fully utilize those resources through increased order processing.



After

“It’s always good when the workforce sees you invest in the workplace,” observed Tattersall, “You get benefits you didn’t realize you were going to get”.

### Testimonial

*“As you get used to things, you believe they are okay and optimized. I’m an old dog and I like to learn new tricks. It’s always good when the workforce sees you invest in the workplace, you get benefits you didn’t realize you were going to get. The CEG BGS-guided changes helped FMP attain its customer’s special supplier status and much more. We increased our capacity and will continue to grow sales thanks to the work we did with CEG; every manufacturer in the Capital Region should be working with the CEG BGS team.”*

— John F. Tattersall, President, Tattersall Industries, LLC doing business as Frank Murken Products

## Center for Economic Growth