

# RESULTS

## COMPANY PROFILE

Founded in 1986, Diba Industries specializes in providing custom solutions for fluid handling systems. In the past 22 years, the company has grown to be a leading supplier of specialty components, precision grade tubing, tubing assemblies and complete subassemblies for fluid transfer applications. Their products serve the analytical, diagnostic, scientific, medical and industrial instrumentation markets. In May 2004, Diba Industries joined the Fluid Technology Division of The Halma Group, an international public holding company. Halma specializes in owning high growth businesses that focus on products for health and safety applications.

Diba designs and manufactures custom fluid handling systems according to their customer's specifications. Products include medical and surgical instruments, liquid level sensors, tubing assemblies and custom fittings, fluid heaters, and bottles cap assemblies. With 100 employees and a 35,000 square foot facility in Danbury, Connecticut, Diba Industries is growing solidly.

## SITUATION

In light of strong growth and constant change in recent years, Diba Industries made the strategic decision to revise its approach, knowledge and application of Lean Manufacturing. The Quality Assurance Manager, Christine Pompa, volunteered to become the Lean Champion and enrolled in CONNSTEP's Continuous Improvement Champion Certification (CICC) program to help move the company forward on its Lean journey.

Standardizing product processing is challenging for a custom design manufacturer. However, Christine had

**Diba Industries**  
Danbury, Connecticut  
100 employees  
[www.dibaind.com](http://www.dibaind.com)

## Lean Solutions

- 75% reduction in lead time; and
- 80% reduction in WIP.



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several ideas for the CICC class project and selected Diba's Thermoform cell where the biggest bottleneck existed. The team goal was to reduce total lead time by 10%; focusing on the non-value added time in the process.

## SOLUTION

Christine obtained strong support from each department and then organized a cross-functional team. To eliminate bottlenecks, the team limited work in progress, (WIP), reorganized the cell into teams, and reduced distance traveled by combining two stations into one. The team also developed a Kanban system for raw material, reducing the four week lead time. Christine found that creating a team environment within the cell was one of the greater challenges of the project due to the resistance to change exhibited by the cell team members.

## RESULTS

The team far exceeded its original goal of reducing total lead time by 10%. In fact, they succeeded in reducing lead time by over 75%; from 6.3 days to 1.2 days. WIP Inventory decreased from 1438 pieces to 287 pieces resulting in substantial monetary savings. Two parts are now in Kanban; operation steps have been reduced from 12 to 8 and distance traveled went from 315 steps in two stations down to 160 steps in one station. Also, with WIP being managed proactively instead of reactively, there is less frenzy on the floor and employees are much calmer.

Once the Thermoform cell was under control, Christine moved on to the largest assembly department at Diba and applied the same concepts to reduce lead time and create three distinct cells. Six months after the CICC program completion, Christine and her team completed continuous improvement processes on the second project. These two departments comprise approximately 25% of the company's business.

Also during this timeframe, Christine completed CONNSTEP's Lean Facilitator & Trainer Certification Program which uses a combination of classroom training and group exercises in a team based environment, providing the materials needed to develop the Lean facilitator skill set. With the goal of pushing Lean implementation throughout the company, she plans to work with CONNSTEP to conduct Lean Office training and additional work in Lean Manufacturing is in place for next year.

"The greatest strength in our relationship with CONNSTEP has been its training and support of my professional development skills. Having completed their CICC and Lean Facilitator programs, I now have the tools and confidence I need to take the lead with Lean.

CONNSTEP's support has been paramount to move the culture change forward at Diba. I am excited about the opportunities for change and improvement and I thank CONNSTEP for helping us champion the effort."

Christine Pompa  
Quality Assurance Manager  
Diba Industries

