

TAP SUCCESS STORIES



Manufacturing Extension Partnership – Sports Licensed Division of the adidas Group, Indianapolis

“Working with TAP/MEP and its established Training Within Industry program, we were able to train more of our employees in less time and more cost-effectively. This is important for a company like Sports Licensed Division, which is committed to matching the demands of an industry where speed and service take priority over everything. We compete globally from here in Indiana because we’ve been able to increase our productivity standards and reduce our operating cost, thereby boosting customer-service levels while maintaining profitability.”

— Joseph Cripe, Vice President for Operations
Sports Licensed Division (SLD) of the adidas Group

- *The TAP Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) expanded its Training Within Industry (TWI) during 2008-09, assisting nearly 40 companies with their workforce training needs. The program, first developed during World War II, assists Indiana companies with advanced training efforts by combining lean manufacturing principles with core workforce training strategies.*

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Sports Licensed Division (SLD) of the adidas Group is a leading distributor of athletic apparel for teams in the NFL, NBA, MLB, NCAA, and NHL arena. From March to June, its outbound orders triple. That causes a hiring surge, boosting employment to nearly 1,000 workers to meet demand driven by anticipation of a new NFL season and back-to-school apparel sales in August. With the industry's cyclical nature, turnover rates can be as high as 50% year over year.

SLD tapped the Purdue Technical Assistance Program (TAP)/ Manufacturing Extension Program (MEP) initiative known as Training Within Industry (TWI) to improve its training programs, reduce training costs, cut employee turnover rates, and boost overall employee productivity. The effort, led by SLD managers Darcy Montgomery and Sarah Kerkhof, focused on distribution employees in the Pick and Pack departments. Through the Purdue program, employment levels stabilized, training costs per employee fell by 60% while employee productivity levels surged 14%.

Purdue's Technical Assistance Program is a NIST MEP network affiliate.