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Welcome,

It is more important than ever for your company to stand apart from the crowd and effectively compete. This issue of *Focus Forward* highlights some low-cost ways by which Georgia companies are improving their profitability--from implementing ISO quality systems and 5S organizational techniques to providing continuing education for their management team.

As always, we would welcome the opportunity to help you partner with Georgia Tech resources to improve your bottom line. Please call or email me directly to discuss the possibilities.

Best regards,

Chris

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Choosing Quality Means Higher Sales for South Georgia Firm

Thomasville, Ga., is home to the North American headquarters of Wilo-EMU, a major international manufacturer of water and wastewater pumps, and the firm wants this facility to be its technology center in North America as well. When some customers and the German parent asked the local plant to attain ISO 9001 certification, it called on Georgia Tech.



Working with Wilo-EMU representatives, Tech's quality specialists reviewed the firm's documentation, developed a system that had more value-added process, and identified training needs. The Tech team also conducted a gap audit, helped develop an implementation plan, assisted with initial internal audits and management review, conducted a pre-assessment audit, and corrected system issues prior to the registration audit.

The company received its ISO 9001 certification in November 2008, less than a year after starting the project, and anticipates positive results, including a sales increase of between \$2 million and \$4 million.

Visit <http://innovate.gatech.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=1551&NewsID=208> for the full story of Georgia Tech's assistance to Wilo-EMU.

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20/20 Vision

The Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech can help you see better operational results with its 20/20 vision process, which addresses both top-line growth and bottom-line savings. To learn how, contact Don Pital (404-894-6117, don.pital@innovate.gatech.edu). [Read More...](#)



Four Ways to Make Training Benefit Your Company

During this economic downturn, training may prove more accessible and beneficial than ever, so Georgia Tech has looked at ways to assist you in reducing costs and getting the best return on your investment. Here are four ways Georgia Tech can help your company stay competitive and productive as the economy rebounds. In 2008, our manufacturing clients reported cost savings of more than \$17 million and improved sales of more than \$110 million. [Read More...](#)



5S: Setting the Standard

For long-term success, 5S--Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain--must move beyond the project stage to become part of the culture of an organization's workplace. For that to happen, all employees must understand the reasoning behind the process and agree with its usefulness. Simply demanding compliance will mean short-term results at best, and eventually a return to the original state.



Thinking through people issues during the Standardize phase can make all the difference in whether the fifth S--Sustain--succeeds. It is this cultural aspect that makes 5S the foundation for further organizational achievement. [Read more](#) about workplace changes via 5S.

Georgia Tech lean specialists have helped more than 100 companies adopt 5S. For more information, contact Tim Israel (404/894-2272, tim.israel@innovate.gatech.edu).

ISO 9001 Update

The 2008 version of ISO 9001 clarifies intent rather than reworking the standard's requirements. For those users who want more background on the thinking behind the changes, the ISO technical committee has compiled an implementation support package. [Read More...](#)

Looking SHARP

In March, the south Georgia firm of Simmons Waycross, a bedding manufacturer, joined an elite group of Georgia companies that have earned a SHARP award from the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Why? For achieving zero Workmen's Compensation claims during the first part of 2009. This was down from \$15,000 in 2008 and \$698,000 in 2005. SHARP stands for Safety Health Achievement Recognition Presentation, and only 17 Georgia firms have received it, a mere 1,500 nationwide.



Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) specialists worked with the company over a 12-month span addressing the entire range of safety and health issues, including ergonomics and prevention of work-related musculoskeletal disorders. The firm made substantial changes to one process with ergonomic stressors, applying lean fundamentals to smooth out the flow and promote human performance and safety.

Overall, GTRI industrial hygiene staff annually visit some 150 companies in diverse industries, striving to improve workplace conditions. Effective health and safety programs prevent injuries and lower associated costs. They also reduce absenteeism and turnover and raise productivity and morale. For additional information on SHARP, visit <http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness/sharp.html>, and to learn more about related GTRI services, contact Daniel Ortiz (404-407-8276, daniel.ortiz@gtri.gatech.edu); also visit www.oshainfo.gatech.edu.

Courses and Resources

Georgia Tech offers many courses for professionals, including classes that help manufacturers make successful business decisions. Click [here](#) (select the appropriate course topic) to see a detailed listing of our upcoming class offerings. Contact Jennifer Freeman at jennifer.freeman@innovate.gatech.edu to find out how you can receive a 25 percent discount.

[Lean Project Management Tools for Product Development](#) (NEW) - **June 24, 2009** Register by May 24 and receive a free *Lean Product Development Guidebook* (\$45 value)

Why, who and how will your company benefit?

- Georgia Tech's experts will help your company streamline your product development process to increase productivity by implementing lean tools and principles.
- Enterprises with a product design function, product designers, manufacturing engineers, product engineers, project managers, managers of product development services, design engineers will benefit by taking this new course.
- By devising a product development process, you will learn how to prioritize your projects for maximum throughput, design for manufacturability to slash production cost and improve communications among departments through integrated product development team efforts.

[Navigating Environmental Compliance](#) - May 20, 2009

Why, who and how will your company benefit?

- Georgia Tech will get your company up to speed on environmental regulations and make sure your facility is in compliance and avoids costly fines.
- Engineers, controllers, facility managers, safety managers and directors and environmental professionals will gain useful tips while attending this training course.
- After attending this class, you will be able to guide your organization to the latest requirements and specific regulations applying to your facility.

Business Excellence Network Meetings

These sessions are free. Topics for the remainder of 2009:

- May 19 - Sustainability
- July 21 - Growth
- September 22 - Quality
- November 17 - Human Resources

For more information, contact Craig Cochran

(craig.cochran@innovate.gatech.edu, 678/699-1690) or Larry Alford (larry.alford@innovate.gatech.edu, 404/895-5237).

Pertinent Programs, Publications, and Web Sites

- Visit www.buyusa.gov to learn how U.S. Export Assistance Centers can help firms by providing counseling, producing research on overseas markets, promoting products and services overseas, and finding international partners.
- To learn more about exporting, go to www.export.gov or obtain a copy of the updated and comprehensive *A Basic Guide to Exporting* from the U.S. Commerce Department and available at many retail outlets.
- *Focus on Trade* is a free quarterly newsletter published by the Southeastern Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (SETAAC) at Georgia Tech. Its purpose is to provide information, resources, and assistance to manufacturers adversely impacted by foreign competition. To see the newsletter and to learn how SETAAC can help your firm, contact Tracy Cole (tracy.cole@innovate.gatech.edu, 770/531-4550).

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