

Metric Machining Refocuses for Improved Performance

Metric Machining, Inc. manufactures precision machined parts for various applications in the aerospace, automotive, commercial, irrigation, trucking and HVAC markets. Founded in 1973 by Richard and Joan Parker, Metric was originally located in Monrovia, California and later relocated to Ontario, California. The company prides itself on producing quality products and providing excellent value to its customers.

Over the past few years, Metric reshaped and refocused itself to better serve its customers and employees.

When David Parker was hired by the board of directors as the president and CEO of Metric Machining two years ago, the old “Metric way” of operating was no longer benefiting the manufacturer and its employees.

“The biggest thing was empowering the employees. It needed to become ‘us’ at Metric instead of ‘us and them,’” said David Parker. Metric’s departments and management had been operating mostly independent from each other, without the internal teamwork that the company required.

Parker cited his first holiday cookout at Metric as a sign of how things used to be. “I was walking around taking pictures, and found little groups of people from different departments scattered around and separated. Fast forward to last December and a new management team, everyone in the company sat as one big family at the table for the holiday event.”

Under new upper management, the focus at Metric changed to increase support and knowledge sharing across departments. Previously, the employees did their own jobs and did not collaborate with each other.

“We had to break down those barriers and move things around so that the engineers can support the shop or work with the sales staff more about solving customer problems for example,” said Parker.



“For 30 years Metric was a very strong company, and it went through some ‘gray’ years. Next year is our 40th anniversary and now that it’s reshaping, Metric is becoming what it’s going to be for the next 40 years, a strong, unified and team-oriented company,” commented Parker.

The refocusing for Metric included identifying changes that needed to be made in their manufacturing. “Since our customer base has changed over the years, we found that by outsourcing some of the work outside of our specialties to another PMPA member, we could focus more on what we’re good at and what our customers need,” added Parker.

The refocus allowed Metric to fine tune its manufacturing to be more profitable. “There are certain processes that Metric has run for 10 years and our engineers will identify a way to automate or improve the process that will cut our costs, often by as much as 30 percent.”

Metric not only adjusted processes to make them more efficient, it invested in new equipment and education initiatives.

“I went into each department and asked, ‘If you could have one thing, what would you want for your department?’ The quality department told me at first, ‘We could use a light over in this corner.’ They were so used to the company not investing that they were afraid to ask for anything. We had to get Metric’s employees to believe in themselves and know that we were investing in them,” said Parker. Departments were encouraged to ask for what they needed to do their jobs, and Metric invested in new equipment as well as analyzed existing machinery to make sure it was being used to its full potential.

Parker also discussed how Metric is addressing the industry’s need for a new generation of workers moving forward. “It’s not just my facility, but in the industry in general, many of our workers are reaching retirement age. There’s an entire generation gap of skilled labor,” said Parker. “Whenever I have the opportunity to go to a school or have a tech school come and tour our facility, I jump on it. People need to know that there are good jobs with good wages in our industry.”

As part of the company’s refocusing, Metric is making an effort to train a new workforce with the experience of those currently in it. “They learn while working here,” said Parker. “It’s going to keep our manufacturing alive.”

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