

CONMED, a Utica, New York-based medical technology company, was presented with the fifth annual “Perfect Engine Site” award at the inaugural Lean Excellence Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, in September. The award was in recognition of their French Road location’s commitment to the continuous improvement philosophy and dedication to lean culture.

CONMED is a medical technology company that produces surgical devices and equipment for minimally invasive procedures and patient monitoring. The company’s products serve the clinical areas of sports medicine-arthroscopy, powered surgical instruments, electrosurgery, cardiac monitoring disposables, endosurgery, and endoscopic technologies. Surgeons and physicians in a variety of specialties, including orthopedics, general surgery, gynecology, neurosurgery, and gastroenterology use these devices. CONMED employs 3,200 people and distributes its products worldwide from several manufacturing locations.

“The Perfect Engine” refers to the precision interworking of human resources and physical assets to achieve outstanding productivity results that create business agility, growth, and profitability. It is also the title of a book authored by TBM Consulting Group’s CEO Anand Sharma, who has consulted with hundreds of companies worldwide in implementing the Toyota Production System.

“The Perfect Engine Site” award recognizes individual plants or offices that have successfully implemented LeanSigma® and have demonstrated innovation and outstanding teamwork in creating visually-managed environments that feature one-piece flow.



Sharma presented the award to David Johnson, vice president of Global Operations and Supply Chain at CONMED. CONMED began its LeanSigma journey in 2006 and continues to use the business improvement technique to innovate, develop, and launch new products and stay competitive in its market.

“We are honored to receive the Perfect Engine Site award,” said Johnson. “Our lean journey has generated significant results for CONMED, many of which include facilitating agility and delivering superior quality and service levels to our customers.”

In the span of just one year, the site has executed more than 33 kaizen events with enhanced results:

- Backorders reduced from \$3 million in January 2007 to \$1.3 million by June 2008
- Inventory turns increased from 3.01 percent to 3.54 percent in two years
- Reduced lead times
- Productivity measured by sales per employee increased 19.1 percent

“We presented the award to CONMED’s French Road facility because of their adaptability to the lean discipline and proven track record,” said Sharma. “CONMED was able to quickly implement and leverage the lean culture that has helped them achieve continuous business growth and results.” ■

