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"Our Accelerate project was a great success. The VSM process allowed ideas to come up," said Hansen. "There were light bulbs going off all over the place. We've applied the same principles to five or six other production parts."

In fact, they've taken an important next step to help continue and strengthen their progress. Anderson has just hired a dedicated Lean Manager with the goal of doing VSM on all production parts.

Anderson Seal Inc. knows how to shorten and improve the complex journey of a part after using Accelerate. The New Berlin supplier of hoses, clamps, fittings and seals that employs 55 was nominated by an OEM customer to participate. Accelerate is a WMEP supplier improvement solution to help optimize performance through Lean methods.

For Anderson Seal, that meant tackling long lead times, excessive WIP and batch processing. They began by creating a Value Stream Map (VSM) for a drain plug used in its OEM vehicle oil pans.

The VSM revealed several areas for improvement, including long lead times from dealing with multiple suppliers. The plug went to a plater and then a thread sealer, returning each time to Anderson Seal for inspection. By requesting certification from vendors, they eliminated the need for incoming inspections at Anderson. Other changes that improved their supplier loop include buying a capacity slice from the thread sealer to simplify ordering and requesting that suppliers dedicate equipment to producing plug components.

"Going to vendor certification, that really simplified the process," said Jim Hensch, WMEP project manager for Anderson Seal.

They also revisited a cleaning step that was once required for only one customer location. After new discussions with the OEM customer, this cleaning requirement was now deemed unnecessary due to a manufacturing process change which Anderson was not aware of. "This confirms the need to routinely compare our internal processes with changing customer requirements," said Jennifer Hansen, Anderson Seal's president.

Additional changes to their assembly process include: created a production cell for single-piece flow, rather than batch processing; instituted a pull system where the part is assembled based on customer demand; set up a supermarket to reduce inventory while ensuring OEM's needs are met; and streamlined packaging and curing process after evaluating adhesive cure time.

The results of their Accelerate work include:**56% reduction in MCT****58% reduction in WIP****52% reduction in supplier lead time****75% reduction in the distance the part traveled internally****To learn more about Accelerate, call WMEP today at 877-800-2124.****[PAGEUP ▶](#)****[PRINT ▶](#)**

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