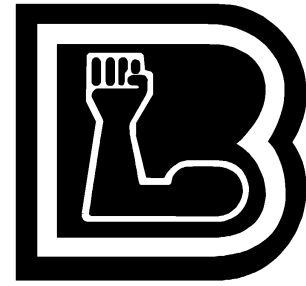




## **Success Story: Barko Hydraulics, Inc.**

<http://www.barko.com>



### **Profile**

Location: Superior, Wisconsin  
Years in Business: Founded in 1963  
No. of Employees: 38  
Products: Log loading and harvesting equipment used mainly in the forest products and refuge business  
NWMOC Projects: Implement Flow Manufacturing with a Pull Kanban System for inventory

### **Situation**

Barko Hydraulics, LLC designs and manufactures a complete line of log loading and harvesting equipment used mainly in the forest products and refuge business. Having experienced a significant decline in profits and sales, Barko management realized they needed help. After consulting with the Superior Planning Commission, Mike Burgess, President of Barko Hydraulics, agreed to have the organization contact the NWMOC for assistance. Mike had experience in implementing Flow Manufacturing at another facility. Having worked with NWMOC in the early 90's and recognizing the level of expertise the Center would bring to the table, Mike asked NWMOC for assistance in implementing Flow Manufacturing.

### **Project**

NWMOC staff members met with representatives from Barko and decided to help implement Flow Manufacturing on their Loader machine assembly line. After Flow Manufacturing training was provided to all employees, NWMOC staff and the Barko team put together a Value Stream Map to help recognize areas in the production area that needed attention. Once training was completed and the Value Stream Map created, NWMOC staff assisted Barko employees in implementing single piece Flow Manufacturing on the Loader assembly line. NWMOC staff also assisted in the placing of parts at the point of use. Once the new plant layout was in place, NWMOC staff assisted Barko in implementing a Pull Kanban system for inventory control. Implementing Flow Manufacturing and a Pull Kanban inventory process at Barko Hydraulics resulted in improved worker productivity, reduced lead times, and improved quality with lower costs.

### **Results**

- Lead time reduced by 50%
- Stock outs reduced dramatically
- Product line sales increased 5%
- Significant reduction in assembly labor time
- High improvement in product quality

“NWMOC gave us a lot of resources and really got the people educated; there wasn't a single person here that didn't get trained. In the first month of implementation using the process NWMOC taught us, our production rate was higher than any month from the previous year--and we haven't looked back since.”  
Mike Burgess, President - Barko Hydraulics, LLC