



**ABT Metals Witnesses Transformative Growth Through ISO 9001:2015 Certification**

Obtaining an ISO 9001:2015 certification is a transformative milestone for a metal manufacturer. ISO, the internationally recognized quality management standard, sets a framework for consistent processes, improved efficiency, and enhanced customer satisfaction. For ABT Metals, the certification signifies a commitment to excellence in every aspect of their operations, from fabrication to customer service. It opens doors to larger markets and demonstrates their dedication to quality and reliability to potential clients.

Bryan Schultz, the President of **ABT Metals** oversees all aspects of metal fabrication and operations at their Statesville, North Carolina location. "I have over 15 years of experience in manufacturing, processing and distribution, along with other fields I have worked in and I appreciate the consistency, stability and benefits of the manufacturing industry."

ABT Metals Manufacturing is a privately owned, ISO 9001:2015-certified full-service job shop committed to exceptional customer service in Iredell County, NC. With a focus on meeting challenging requirements, ABT Metals offers a comprehensive range of capabilities including fabrication, cutting, stamping, punching, machining, bending, and deep drawing. The organization specializes in building parts and assemblies used

across diverse industries such as construction, sports equipment, automotive, medical, military, industrial, energy, furniture, and firearms. With their dedication to quality and versatility, ABT Metals stands ready to meet the manufacturing needs of its clients with precision and reliability.

***"We knew obtaining ISO certification would open the doors to larger organizations"***  
 – Bryan Schultz, President, ABT Metals

Historically, ABT Metals primarily focused on manufacturing metal products for the owner's other companies while offering stamping and job shop capabilities to external customers. Obtaining ISO certification became imperative as the desire to expand the business and partner with larger customers to increase volume. Certification was viewed as a crucial step to demonstrate that ABT Metals was more than just a typical job shop; it was ready to compete in the big leagues and deliver quality products and services to a broader market. "Our company was limited to customers of a typically smaller scale, as larger organizations either desire or require ISO certification, among other certifications, to be

considered a vendor. We knew obtaining ISO certification would open the doors to larger organizations,” stated Schultz.

When it was time to look for an organization that could help them implement ISO 9001:2015, they were drawn to NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions because of their fair pricing and local support, which benefited the great state by utilizing an in-state company. “It’s been a great experience working with NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions. The feedback and responses are always knowledgeable and timely,” said Schultz.

Getting their certification took work. It took approximately two years due to losing the first two employees heading up the program. Schultz and ABT Metals persisted in knowing the ISO 9001:2015 certification would benefit the organization substantially in the long run. “Implementing change was a significant challenge for our team as many resisted the idea. The transition required additional training, documentation, and a commitment to consistent performance based on new procedures and policies, a departure from how the company operated previously.” Schultz continued, “Understandably, these extensive changes led to employees’ skepticism about the new approach’s benefits. Some team members chose to leave, while others were let go for their refusal to conform. Despite initial doubts, we firmly believe that the greater the sacrifice, the greater the reward, and we are determined to achieve excellence in our endeavors.”

***“Throughout this process, we learned we have great employees.”***

– Bryan Schultz, President, ABT Metals

As the president, Schultz supported the program from the beginning, being the biggest advocate for making it happen. “As some employees threatened to quit due to the changes, I would not allow someone not on board to decide whether or not we could make this happen, and we lost employees in the process, which is never easy. Having the end goal vision is critical in

continuously moving forward, simply looking at challenges as opportunities to improve our business,” remarked Schultz. ABT Metals had to create every aspect required by the ISO standards, including but not limited to policies, procedures, flow charts, process diagrams, formal training, record keeping and verifications. Meetings were formalized and documented, quality check forms were created and KPI metrics were put in place to track every process.

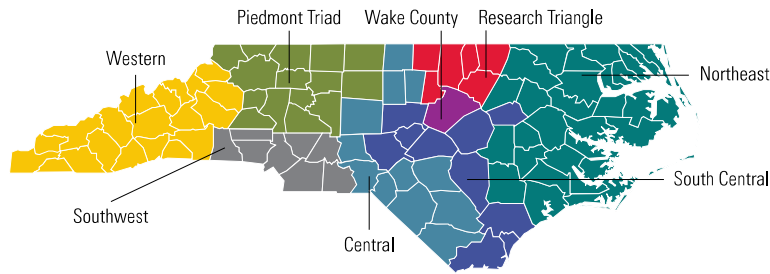
“Throughout this process, we learned that we have great employees. ABT Metals is like my family. Although I may disagree with some, disappointed by others and proud of those who always go above and beyond, I appreciate all that everyone has done for the company and their coworkers. Being part of such a great company is humbling and learning that challenges are always easier when you have support. Our team succeeded in this venture due to their hard work and support for each other,” Schultz stated proudly.

As a result of working with **NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions** to obtain an ISO 9001:2015 certification, ABT Metals created/retained two jobs. They saw \$75,000 in investment in new processes and \$75,000 in employee skills.

Schultz says organizations seeking an ISO 9001:2015 certification should prepare for significant changes. “Developing and implementing policies and procedures requires extensive administrative work and relies heavily on feedback and input from all departments. It’s not a task that can be delegated to a single individual; rather, it necessitates active participation from all areas of the organization. While there will be a designated leader for the project, it is crucial for management at all levels to understand and fully support the initiative. This support must cascade down through the ranks, emphasizing the potential benefits of achieving such a significant milestone,” Schultz expressed.

“NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions did not create the program for us but guided us through the process from start to finish, holding our hand, smacking our hand and high-fiving us all the way, setting us up for success.”

# NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions (IES) Regional Managers Serve All 100 Counties in North Carolina.



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