

Parallax Insights Case Study #1 – UMC Builders

Note: This engagement was completed by David Richards and took place slightly before the formation of Parallax Insights. The methodology used is identical to the 5-Step Parallax Process now used by Parallax Insights.

Note: Parallax Insights is mainly targeting manufacturing businesses, but our methodology is effective in other types of businesses as well, such as construction. If the challenges your business is facing are similar to those addressed here, [please get in touch with us!](#)

1. Overview

UMC Builders, a construction company in Arizona with 50 employees, was struggling with lower-than-expected margins on its projects. David Richards (now of Parallax Insights) was brought in for a three-day engagement to identify root causes of the low margins and implement a plan to improve profitability.

2. The Situation

Despite a steady flow of projects, UMC's completed jobs consistently fell short of margin expectations, creating repeated payroll risks and threatening long-term sustainability. Ownership recognized they did not have the expertise to address these systemic issues internally.

3. What We Did

Using the Parallax Process, David assessed UMC's operations and implemented targeted improvements:

1. **Assess:** Met with ownership and then with employees to get a detailed understanding of their challenges, frustrations, and solution suggestions
2. **Evaluate:** Analyzed employee feedback and quantitative data to determine root causes for each challenge
3. **Report:** Documented and prioritized the challenges/root causes, then collaborated with ownership to create a detailed action plan with implementation steps and milestone tracking.
4. **Implement:** Took actions to implement (or begin implementing) all identified challenges. Communicated implementation plans to the rest of the team, including spelling out implementation actions and timelines to specific key employees.
5. **Re-Evaluate:** Held follow-up coaching sessions to track milestones and adapt approach as needed.

4. Results

- Overhauled the hiring process to emphasize personality and soft skills in addition to technical ability.
- Created an executive management team and elevated two key employees to serve on it, allowing better management decisions to be made in less time.
- Trained ownership on techniques for building a positive, approachable, and engaging work culture.
- Established milestones and a tracking system to ensure that continuous improvement tasks are sufficiently planned and fully executed.
- Improved procurement processes to ensure that all materials and tools are available at the job site when needed.
- Analyzed best practices of the most productive build team and rolled them out company-wide.
- Enhanced project close-out processes to include margin analysis and investigation into causes of erosion.

Testimonial from UMC:

I am one of the owners of UMC Builders in Surprise Arizona.

We hired David as a business consultant to observe and assess our business.

We have experienced significant growth and needed the advice of a professional to show us where our weak points were and help us adjust to facilitate that growth.

David's approach was direct, organized and catered to where we were at as a company. His technique is to listen first, ask questions second, assess the information and then help! Even though the three days he was with us were very intense, it was worth every penny! If you are a company that needs help or even just a boost to become more profitable I recommend you use David!

We have already seen a significant change in our process and our employees are very optimistic about the future.

I can't say enough about his time with us!

5. Key Takeaways

This case demonstrates that the Parallax Process delivers measurable results not only in manufacturing but also in other industries such as construction. By teaching UMC to use root cause analysis and empowering its management team, Parallax enabled sustainable improvements that ownership can continue without ongoing outside intervention. The engagement highlights three broader lessons:

1. **Systemic issues require systemic solutions.** Margins weren't fixed by chasing symptoms—they improved when the company aligned hiring, culture, procurement, and project management processes.
2. **Leadership alignment is critical.** Elevating a management team and training ownership to be more approachable created the foundation for stronger decision-making and employee engagement.
3. **Continuous improvement must be structured.** By setting milestones, tracking progress, and learning from top-performing teams, UMC built a repeatable system for ongoing performance gains.

Parallax Insights helps organizations break through operational barriers and turn everyday challenges into opportunities for profitability and growth.

If your business would benefit from similar results, it all starts with one simple conversation. [Click here to book a free consultation call!](#)

