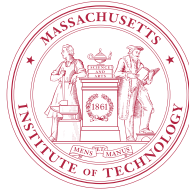


**Suzanne Berger**

Raphael Dorman-Helen Starbuck Professor  
Co-Chair, Production in the Innovation Economy  
Commission



**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**

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December 13, 2011

Mr. Mark Lamont  
Chief Executive Officer  
Chief Financial Officer  
MIS & Plant Operations Manager  
Hunttown Products  
44708 Climbana Wterford Road  
Columbiana, OH 44408

Dear Mr. Lamont:

I am writing to ask if you would be willing to meet with Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers who are studying American manufacturing. Your company figures among a number of Ohio companies that had a strong performance over the past decade. The MIT research team seeks to understand the issues facing manufacturing in the United States, and we will be conducting interviews in several hundred companies across the country. Each of these interviews will be held in strict confidentiality.

I realize that your schedule must be very busy and that asking for an hour of time to meet with us is a great imposition. We think that U.S. manufacturing is at a critical moment, and that we need to do everything possible to learn from the best practices of existing companies and to recommend policies based on these experiences. At the end of the eighties MIT researchers contributed to the national debate with our study *Made in America*. With your help, we hope this time again to identify ways of strengthening production in the United States.

The main issues we would like to discuss with you focus on how ideas for new products or processes and improvements move to early stage production through to commercial production and the market place. What are the challenges you face in scaling up a project? What strategies do you employ (in-house production, contracting out, hybrid models)? What are the critical inputs to your process (skilled workers, facilities, suppliers, capital) and how do you find them?

Our MIT research team will be in Ohio for several weeks in mid-January and February, and we would be very grateful for your participation. I can be reached at 617-253-6640 or by email at [szberger@mit.edu](mailto:szberger@mit.edu). Members of our MIT team will follow up with your office directly to try to find a time we could meet with you.

Many thanks for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suzanne Berger". Below the signature, the name "Suzanne Berger" is printed in a standard black font.

Suzanne Berger