

Improvement Initiatives

Change – for the better

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FREE NEWSLETTER

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"It is a hard matter, my fellow citizens, to argue with the belly, since it has no ears"

- Plutarch

Trim the Fat or Die

by Jay Watson

Over the last few years, many organizations have put on a little weight and have seen their "waste" grow and grow – some into bloated bureaucracies. Many businesses struggle and some have not survived the slumping economy.

Here's some common sense ways to trim the fat and, ultimately, be more prepared for that business up tick...

TRAINING

Continuous improvement requires intensive and long-term training in addition to traditional management development. It sounds contrary to logic, but - during a slowdown, implement skills based training. Effective efficiency improvement efforts will require basic data gathering/ analysis and systematic problem solving by all.

One company committed to improving did not allow divisional managers to cut training even though some departments were not meeting overall business objectives. Few organizations demonstrate this level of commitment to training.

RECOGNITION and REWARDS

Continuous Improvement flourishes best under group and departmental reward programs. Yet, too many managers continue to single out their "favorites" - those who come in 30 minutes early and 'look busy', but do not really go the extra mile to satisfy the needs of the customer or participate in helping others succeed.

Individual rewards do indeed spur individual accomplishments; however,

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Business Goals Drive Training Needs (Part 3 of 3)

by Jay Watson

Always compute the cost of training per participant, and budget sufficient funding to cover the event. Don't forget to schedule make-up sessions – be flexible with the schedule and don't forget the off-shifts. Consider 'charging-back' to each department the cost of the training. If the instructor is an employee, consider paying them out of the cost of the event.

Also, consider paying them a 'bonus'

only if instructing classes is not usually within their normal job duties.

Lastly, measure the effect of the training through increased production or sales. Keep records of attendance and trainee's progress. Consider a 'give away' that participants can display that reminds them of the concepts or skills taught. Always maintain the link to corporate goals and objectives.

Lend a Hand



SPOTLIGHT ON:

Service Corp of Retired Executives

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" is a nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide.

SCORE is a resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

SCORE is headquartered in Herndon, VA and Washington, DC and has 370 chapters throughout the United States and its territories, with 11,200 volunteers nationwide.

Both working and retired executives and business owners donate time and expertise as business counselors. SCORE was founded in 1964.

We are America's premier source of free and confidential small business advice for entrepreneurs.

Learn more at:

www.score.org

Trim the Fat or Die ... (continued from page 1)

outstanding and astonishing Customer Satisfaction requires commitment from the total organization. As one manager put it, "We all succeed, or we all fail together."

TOTAL EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT
Company management, who said they committed to the principles of quality improvement, invited employees to evaluate a piece of equipment for their department. There were two models available. Employees, through their participation meetings, selected instrument "A." However, upper management, without even communicating the reasons, purchased instrument "B."

Management may have the best intentions when they ask for employee input, but too often ignore the input (and participation in the process) without sufficient justification.

The late Dr. W. Edwards Deming, reminded us to drive out fear. Fear of reprimand, fear of failure, fear of ridicule, fear of the boss, fear of the president, fear of looking bad in front of others – all these can prohibit the risk-taking and paradigm shifts necessary for continuous improvement to flourish in an organization.

Even in the worst of times (when you have the time)... look for ways to identify waste and wasteful practices, and eliminate them!

When the economy turns around, and it will, you will be one of the first out of the starting gate. Perhaps, seen as lean.

One company motto proclaims -

***"Do the right things...
and do them right !"***

The 5 Elements of Every Process (Part 2 of 2)

In addition to the Human Resource, Methods/ Instructions and the Equipment considerations - other elements include:

4) Material

How do you know that you are using the right parts and materials?

How do you verify that the age life and shelf life of the parts you are using are acceptable?

How do you designate parts and materials waiting for inspection or other verification?

How do segregate non-conforming parts and materials?

Do you fully understand what the safety

considerations are for your materials?

"Your product is only as good as the quality of your raw materials!"

5) Environment

Are environmental controls important for the work you do? If so, how do you maintain and monitor controls.

Do you maintain the cleanliness of your area?

Is FOD (Foreign Object Debris) or ESD (Electro Static Discharge) a concern for the work you do? Are proper controls in place?

"The effects of environment often have a profound impact on your product during manufacturing, handling, or operation!"



"Mustangs of Las Colinas"

Do Great Work ...

Learn and Grow from It

Mustangs at Las Colinas are a bronze sculpture by Robert Glen that decorates Williams Square in Irving, Texas. It is said to be the largest equestrian sculpture in the world. Read about the eight-year long design and fabrication process below:

Ben H. Carpenter had a vision. His vision was to transform his family's ranch, fondly named El Ranchito de Las Colinas, meaning the Little Ranch of the Hills, into a world class development. Las Colinas would be transformed from the open grassland of the past into an urbanized community for a new generation of Texans. Mr. Carpenter was determined to create within Las Colinas a grand plaza, a gathering place for future generations.

In order to establish a unique identity for this urban space, a sculpture that captured the free spirit embodied in the heritage of Texas would be the centerpiece. Wild mustangs that roamed the early days of Texas would be the identifying piece for this grand gathering place. Mr. Ben Carpenter unveiled his plans in 1973 that would turn his family ranch into the world-renowned master-planned community it is today.

Robert Glen is given the assignment to create the mustang sculpture in the summer of 1976.

He was asked to create a band of mustangs crossing a stream of water in the middle of the plaza proportioned so that they could be viewed from any direction.

Glen spent a year of research preliminary to starting the actual sculpturing process. He read books and historical periodicals to fully understand the background of these magnificent animals that were brought to the American continents from Spain and which sired the original wild horses of Texas and the western United States.

Glen constructed a number of small-scale model horses in various positions and movements reflecting the mood and motion of the concept that had been given him. Modeling was done in plasticine, considered an improved material over clay for this type of work, to facilitate greater detailing.

Glen used a mixture of fiberglass and resin in which to cast a lightweight yet durable model that would endure the trip from Nairobi to England. The fiberglass maquettes were cleaned and prepared for shipment to England. Each fiberglass intermediate size maquette was crated and shipped by air from Nairobi to the Morris Singer Foundry at Basingstoke, England, about an hour's drive from central London. Periodically, Glen flew to England and spent several months at a time in the foundry where the final process of creating the 1 1/2 life-size model was begun, using the intermediate size maquette as a scaling and measurement guide.

Coaches Corner



'Prevent, React, Do Nothing'

- Which direction will you take?

Prevent

- σ Audits
- σ Risk Management
- σ Continuous Process Improvement
- σ Process Mapping
- σ Statistics

React

- σ Problem Solving
- σ Fishbone
- σ 5 Why's
- σ Corrective Actions
- σ Gap Analysis

Do Nothing

- σ Rework
- σ Scrap
- σ Customer Complaints

Quality Control is "Pay me now or pay me later!"

Learn more about quality improvement at www.asq.org

**Don't
Sideline
Safety**



**CELEBRATE
SAFETY 1st!**

**Halloween isn't scary with
these Safety suggestions:**

- Closely supervise the outing for children.
- Establish a curfew (a return time) for older kids.
- Avoid giving choking hazards.
- Inspect all candy.
- Parents and adults should ensure the safety of pedestrian trick-or-treaters.
- Make sure children under age 10 are monitored.
- Drive slowly.
- Watch for children in the street.
- Exit driveways and alleyways carefully.

Do Great Work ... continued

The Morris Singer Foundry, whose heritage includes the casting of public monuments around the world such as the famed Lions of London's Trafalgar Square, is one of the oldest continuing sculpture foundries in the world. Founded in 1848 by John Webb Singer, utilizing British, French, and Belgian artisans, it was merged in 1927 with the Morris Art Bronze Foundry and in 1973 with the Paris sculpture foundry, Susse Fondeure S.A.

The bronze casting process itself was completed on November 10, 1981. The London firm of Evan Cook was engaged to prepare the bronze sculptures for shipment to Texas. They were transported to Heathrow Airport outside London. Upon arrival at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, the cargo of mustangs was unloaded from the plane and brought overland to Las Colinas.

Finally, on September 25, 1984, the sculpture was in place and the plaza was open for the public to inspect and enjoy. Assembled together were the nine bronze mustangs, forming the largest equestrian sculpture in the world. The centerpiece of the plaza, the Mustangs of Las Colinas, shall be a lasting memorial to the vanguard of the civilization of Texas.



Yes, it's a turquoise "Mikey D's" (in Sedona, Arizona)

Can you name the company or product?

- 1) The ultimate driving machine
- 2) Don't leave home without it
- 3) The other white meat
- 4) Just do it
- 5) Is it in you?
- 6) Breakfast of champions
- 7) Melts in your mouth, not in your hands

Why a tagline or personal message?

It is important because the vast majority of people just do not have time for me. They really don't. They need a snippet to let them know who I am, what I do, and how I can help.

Someone asked me, if I could summarize the value my free lean site brings to clients and others, what would it be? I thought a minute and said; to help them! Help them? they replied ... Yes, I answered; Help them ... **Employ Improvement Initiatives!**

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Off the page ...

Let Ideas Percolate !

Mike Maddock has given me permission to post, "101 Ways to Brew Up a Great Idea." Hope you find it as inspiring as I have -- again and again -- on sleepy-eyed mornings.

1. Take a warm bath.
2. Go for a drive with the windows open.
3. Order Chinese food and eat it with chopsticks.
4. Call a random phone number — ask a stranger.
5. Ask a child.
6. Create an idea that would get you fired.
7. Paint your bedroom.
8. Consult tarot cards.
9. Gargle.
10. Play football.
11. Sing a show tune on a crowded elevator.
12. How would your favorite uncle solve the problem?
13. Doodle.
14. Do a crossword puzzle.
15. Pray for a little help.
16. Ask the most creative person you know.
17. Ask the least creative person you know.
18. Run.
19. Ask your local postal worker.
20. Ice skate.
21. Take a shower with your clothes on.
22. Ask yourself, "What rhymes with orange?"
23. Talk to your favorite cheerleader about the idea.
24. Breathe slowly.
25. Flip a coin.
26. Mow the lawn.
27. What is the simplest solution?
28. Do 20 quick push-ups.
29. Go shopping!
30. Write the alphabet backwards.
31. Build a fort in your office.
32. How would an ant solve the problem?
33. Create a silly solution that rhymes.
34. Make paper airplanes.
35. Use three wishes to solve your challenge.
36. Browse through a bookstore.
37. Take a survey.
38. Make a sculpture with mashed potatoes.
39. Fish.
40. Go to Vegas, play a lot of craps.

41. Daydream.
42. How would you solve it with an infinite budget?
43. Write out the problem with your opposite hand.
44. Sing the National Anthem with a cockney accent.
45. Eat dinner.
46. Change your brand of coffee.
47. Wash dishes.
48. Find the solution in the clouds.
49. Swing.
50. Take a nap at your desk.
51. Go bowling.
52. Spin in your chair shouting: "WHOOPEE!"
53. Eat a snow cone.
54. Contort your face in a strange and unusual ways.
55. High-five yourself.
56. Go camping.
57. Take Spot for a walk.
58. Massage your scalp for 10 minutes.
59. Play musical chairs.
60. Go for a walk in the rain.
61. Pick up something with your toes.
62. Communicate.
63. Stand on your head.
64. Stand on someone else's head.
65. Go for a drive.
66. Call a psychic hotline, laugh at their predictions.
67. Caffeine.
68. More caffeine.
69. Imagine explaining the idea at an awards banquet.
70. Make a prank phone call.
71. Think about it before you go to sleep.
72. Call mom, she can fix anything.
73. When in doubt, resort to duct tape.
74. Watch slasher movies to boost your creative confidence.
75. Fly a kite.
76. Shake up a can of pop and open it.
77. Go for a walk.
78. Draw a picture of it.
79. Pretend to snorkel.
80. Think like a child.
81. Walk outside and wave to a stranger.
82. Look at the person's paper next to you.
83. Climb a tree.
84. Find a new word in the dictionary.
85. Take an ice cream break.
86. Make a daisy chain.

87. Dance a polka.
88. Play in a toy store.
89. Just don't think about it.
90. Jump on a treadmill.
91. Alphabetize your refrigeratables.
92. Pretend like it doesn't matter.
93. Paint with your fingers.
94. Clean your toilet.
95. Lose yourself in your favorite music.
96. Watch old black & white reruns.
97. Listen to bees.
98. Walk in a grocery store – notice clever solutions.
99. Rake the leaves in your yard.
100. Sit outside and count the stars.