

Improvement Initiatives

Change – for the better

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FREE NEWSLETTER

September 2009



“The pursuit of perfection often impedes improvement.”

– George F. Will

"Continually Improving" - A Management Process

by Jay Watson

Your challenge as a Manager is to get more out of less. Less material, less labor cost, less capital. You need to improve productivity. How?

One way to improve productivity is to innovate - to find better ways to get the job done. That's where quality comes in. It's an idea that thrives on innovation, and a proven way to increase productivity. In fact, no strategy for productivity improvement can succeed without it.

You will find a lot of information on productivity, and a lot on quality. To read some of the literature, and listen to some of the talk, you might think you have to choose one or the other.

In practice, you will find that quality and productivity are inseparable.

Companies that have linked their efforts in a more comprehensive approach have seen a substantial improvement to the bottom line.

The productivity lost for poor quality is substantial --- and all too often unrecognized. A.V. Feigbaum, author of Total Quality Control calls it "the hidden factory." Things like - - - the area devoted to rework; inventories kept as a buffer; and products returned or recalled.

According to Tom Peters and Nancy Austin in their book; A Passion for Excellence: "There are only two ways to create and sustain superior performance over the long haul. First, take exceptional care of your customers via superior service and superior quality. Second, constantly innovate ! That's it."

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Business Goals Drive Training Needs (Part 2 of 3)

by Jay Watson

Questions to be considered when developing a specific training initiative include:

Does the subject matter require lecture?
Group discussions? Demonstrations?

Can the situation be simulated within the classroom? Or trained on-the-job?

How can audio-visual aids be utilized?
Instruction manuals? Job descriptions?
Are there off-the-shelf videos or slides available to enhance learning?

Can photographs of machinery, equipment, or products be utilized in the training?

Can a miniature model be used to demonstrate the operations?

Can a game or small group activity be used to simulate a typical situation?
Where is the training going to be conducted? In-house or off site?

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Get More Done

• **Do not wait until a project is almost due.** As soon as you receive the project, list all required small steps that will lead to the completed work. By breaking the task into manageable pieces, you are more likely to tackle it than if you wait to do it all at once.

• **Using your list of steps, work backwards from the due date.** Mark the dates you need to have each of the steps completed, with a bit of wiggle room in case some emergency does come up. If you do this, you will have a clear picture of when to begin and what needs to happen each day or week.

• **Prioritize your next day's work the evening before.** Do not wait until the morning to start thinking about where your day is headed. If you have all of your tasks in one place (one system), it is easy to determine your daily priorities. On the other hand, if you have To-Do lists scattered around, you do not have one system. You end up with another list as you try to create the day's schedule.

• **Avoid procrastination.** When you keep stalling on a project, you end up with the last-minute pressure. If you predetermined what your biggest chore for the day was, stick to that instead of diverting to smaller tasks that are easier to check off!



"Continually Improving" - A Management Process ... (continued from page 1)

Your company has four important resources to contribute to both quality and productivity improvement. Your job is to mobilize these resources to improve. (In addition, don't forget about Safety!)

1) People

Provide opportunities for employees to use their skills, creativity, and experience. This means Training across the board and at all levels in quality and job related skills. It also means teamwork. Strategies may include an executive-level 'improvement' council, interdepartmental teams, and a suggestion system for individual contributors. No matter what strategy may be utilized - - - recognition for a job well done should be incorporated.

2) Statistics

Products and processes have a lot to tell --- if engineers and managers have been trained in the statistical tools available to help improve quality and productivity.

They will tell you what your processes can do, and how well you are doing.

3) \$\$\$\$ (Dollars)

A good quality management system (QMS) will show you what investments in Prevention and Planning for Quality will have the biggest payoff. It should show where to apply resources to achieve the most significant results - - - the reduction of inspection costs, and more important, reduction of common failure costs: scrap, repair and rework.

4) Leadership

Your job as a Manager has always involved cost reduction and productivity. With an effective QMS - - - one based on Corrective Action, that is to find the root cause of a problem, correct it and prevent it for recurring - - - you can do more with less. Nevertheless, active involvement of the leadership team is a prerequisite !

Discuss ideas about improvement initiatives with your peers and your Management. Turn ideas into reality.

Here's Jz 'SQS' Top 10 List (David Letterman, he's not !)

Use this quick checklist to garner ideas and drive action!

Safety:

1. What is the 1 thing you can do, right now, to make your area safer? _____
2. My new way to *promote* Safety in the area is: _____

Quality:

3. What is the 1 thing you can do, right now, to improve Quality?

4. One thing I can mistake-proof is:

5. I can *sustain* improvement by:

Speed:

6. What is just 1 thing you could do to improve 5-S efforts in your area? _____
7. I can eliminate waste by

8. What 1 thing can you do to make the "KANBAN"/ Communication System work better? Easier? Faster?

9. I can reduce Set-Up time by:

10. I will improve Maintenance by:

The 5 Elements of Every Process (Part 1 of 2)



1) Human Resources

People come first. Skilled individuals understand the importance of process management and change control.

Hey Process L-E-A-D-E-R, ask yourself:

Learning

Am I familiar with all the instructions and steps?

Experience

Am I trained and certified?

Attitude

Is there a way to ask for help? Do I know whom to ask?

Dynamics

How do I document and warrant my work?

Enthusiasm

Am I aware of the criticality of my product or service?

Responsibility

Is Safety a priority?

"You are a leader of your process!"

2) Methods / Instructions

Are instructions Clear, Concise, Controlled?

Do they provide enough detail to perform the task?

Can the operational sequence be followed?

Do you have the necessary documentation?

Are shop practices consistent with documented procedures?

Can you warrant the work as stated?

"You must be able to understand the process instructions before you can perform them!"

3) Equipment commitment!

- respect
- honor
- cherish
- calibrate
- maintain

Do you have sufficient information on how to set up and maintain your machine?

Do you verify that your equipment is calibrated?

Do you know how to monitor the output of your machine, so you know the part is right?

Does your equipment have a preventive maintenance schedule?

Do you have provision for an emergency shutdown or shift change/ handoff?

Do you understand the safety measures for you and your equipment?

"If you take care of your equipment, it will take care of you and your process!"

Next time ... Material & Environment

Coaches Corner



'Man in the Mirror'

- Try something new, share your valuable experience - Mentor!

- σ If you are interested in being a mentor, look around for someone who could use your help and guidance.
- σ The relationships that cause us to grow the most are those that challenge us. Often this is due to our differences as individuals.
- σ So if you wish to learn and understand more about yourself and others, form a mentoring partnership with someone different from yourself.

Learn more at:

<http://entrepreneurs.about.com/od/businessmentoring/a/valueofamentor.htm>

**Don't
Sideline
Safety**



**CELEBRATE
SAFETY 1st!**

**Before Superbowl
Sunday comes around,
throw away old
extension cords
and replace faulty
wall outlets and
light switches, too.**

**Keep a fire extinguisher
in the Kitchen and
another one in Garage.**

**Replace CO2
&
Smoke Alarm
Batteries each
4th of July!**

More info at nsc.org

Training Needs continued ...

Does the facility have 'break-out' rooms for small group discussions?

Does facility have necessary tools such as white boards? Lectern? Microphone?

Does facility have comfortable chairs? Adequate writing surfaces?

Should training be done during work hours? Are participants going to be paid?

How long should the sessions be? How many sessions should it take?

Can you serve as the instructor? Do you have an in-house expert?

Is there a qualified outside vendor who can do it?

Is the training just for new employees? Would existing employees benefit?

Should training be a condition of employment?

Next time ... the cost / benefit considerations of training

Label Shelves, Not People



Before



After

Utilizing 5S concepts, the Shipping stations were optimized and standard work instructions (documentation) posted to represent needed work content, material, and packing standards.

Visual Management (VM) techniques were incorporated to identify needed equipment, tools, and supplies. Visual Control (VC) indicators were placed in incoming queues to identify flow of material and prioritization of orders.

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