Respect for People

By Harold Chapman

RESPECT FOR PEOPLE MEANS

When we consider what respect for people actually means, we need to define our terms to understand that it includes making every effort to understand others, taking responsibility and doing our best to build mutual trust. To do this correctly, we must stimulate personal and professional growth, share the opportunities of development and maximize individual and team performance. We consider respect for people as a key principle in operating any organization. As respect for people is a key operating principle, the concept of "management owes" supports it.

MANAGEMENT OWES

"Management owes" ensures management provides the following to its people before requiring its people to provide for them:

Materials that are of high quality
Methods and Processes that are well defined and proven to yield results
Machines that are well maintained
A non-blaming/non-judgmental environment that fosters success
Removal of the barriers that are preventing the team from moving forward
Resources that are needed to achieve challenging target conditions
Work that is meaningful
Follow-up that is consistent after tasks are performed
Work Instructions that are standardized
Response to Problems that is timely
Problem Solving Coaching that is inspirational and motivating

Process and method development is a large gap we see with organizations today. We often define processes up to a particular point, but then for some reason, either lack of understanding or patience, we stop defining the process. There are numerous "half-baked" processes in our businesses. However, the product or service must get delivered, so we put the new process into practice and let the people deal with the ambiguity. This leaves sections in the process without clear definition. The people who get us through this uncertainty are the team members who add value to the product or service. We are asking these team members to bridge this gap for management daily without any positive recognition in many cases. Each team member may bridge the area of uncertainty differently as a result. The non-standard processing will give inconsistent results to the

customer. We may think the customer doesn't notice this difference in processing, but in reality, they probably do.

EXPECTATIONS OF TEAM MEMBERS

When management provides what they owe to the team members, we can then expect the team members to give us the following:

Engagement to operate, maintain, and improve the core process
Commitment to safely meet production rate at designated quality levels
Commitment to consistently follow established standards
Engagement in problem solving

One cannot expect workers to do their part if management has not done its part. Principles are supported by concepts which then are supported by practices. The principle of "respect for people" is supported by the concept of "management owes" and "management owes" is supported by the practice of ensuring that "man" is not the root cause of problems in the brainstorming process. When we teach practical problem solving to our clients, we always insist that "man" be the last item considered on the fishbone diagram. This is a great way to put what one values into practice. This also sends a strong message to the people in the process that we stand by our principles. Acting otherwise, we make ourselves hypocrites.
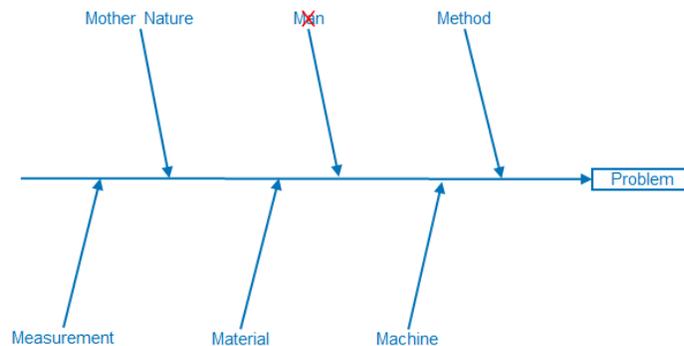
GOOD AND BAD EXAMPLES

In our many dealings with clients, we have witnessed good and bad examples of "respect for people." One client saw the need to remove drinks from the production area due to empty cups and bottles being left in the work area and in units. Normally, management would simply demand there be no drinks in the area. This particular management team decided to get everyone a very nice stainless steel drinking cup with the team members' name on them. This is a good example of operating with respect for people. Consider this bad example. A client decided to create a "lean" cell. The client took

everyone's chair, moved all of the machines together, and positioned the stations in a "U" shape. No other changes to the process occurred. This did nothing to improve the quality of the work, reduce the levels of work in process between the machines, or reduce any of the other wastes. In effect, all they had really done was remove people's chairs in the name of "improvement." This is where we coined the phrase "This isn't lean manufacturing; this is mean manufacturing."

WHERE IS YOUR WORKFORCE?

In general, the way we view our people can be explained using the following progression (See Figure 2 Below):

Figure 2: Progression

We must ponder and reflect. "Where in the above progression do we fall as an organization? Do we even desire to advance in the progression? Are we willing to invest in our people to the point where we can make the progression a reality" We at Drive Inc. have years of experience building teams that are considered vital to the company's competitive advantage. If you would like to schedule a no-obligation introduction meeting with one of our team building veterans, call Paul Eakle at 865-323-3491.