

MANUFACTURING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VALUE NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES:

- Contentment leads to complacency. Never allow yourself the luxury of basking in your accomplishments. Always be prepared to learn something new and apply that knowledge to day-to-day operations.
- Never let your sense of pride or ego restrict your ability to acquire new learning. Sometimes employees do not want to appear dumb, so questions go unasked or situations are avoided that may display ignorance. We must be comfortable with the fact that learning is an interactive and iterative process. We learn in many ways; from people above us, from people below us, by observing others, by taking classes, attending seminars, reading books, through trial and error, by making mistakes and through practice.
- Always strive to provide every individual in the organization the opportunity to learn.

INSPIRE OWNERSHIP OF PROCESS:

- Be sure to listen to the other person's concerns as to better understand the situation. Offer advice when appropriate, but give the person the opportunity to fail. Avoid the trap of mandating decisions. Be conscious of the desire of employees to implement solutions that please management. Keep focused on the goal of improving the process.
- Work together, but do not do the inservice of doing one's job for them. Learn to count on teammates and trust that they will do their job and be there when needed.
- Share knowledge and experience whenever possible, but never presume that your way is the only way to solve a problem or resolve an issue. Let people make decisions. Encourage them to implement solutions. The most important goal is to let them take ownership of those solutions.
- With freedom comes responsibility; and with responsibility comes accountability. The first responsibility is to our customers, but we must also be aware of the perceptions of our teammates and work to gain their confidence.

ENCOURAGE INNOVATIVE ACTION:

- Be willing to challenge all sacred cows and work to prove accepted practices wrong (because the world changes,) in an effort to discover new and better ways of doing the things that we do best. Being best today does not guarantee success tomorrow.
- Be willing to try new ways of doing things. We are better to try a dozen things and fail, than to try nothing and stay the way we are today.
- Although we always strive to do things right the first time, we will make mistakes. Making mistakes is not only allowed, but expected and encouraged. If we have tried something new and it doesn't work, we have very likely eliminated a particular method from our list of possible solutions.

SEEK COMPROMISE TO OPTIMIZE BUSINESS PROCESSES:

- Always seek compromise. Too often in business, employees are trained to be strong-willed, hard-nosed and fight to get their way. The key is to realize that the solution is seldom at either end of the extreme, appreciate the perspective of the other individual and find the solution that best satisfies the needs of both parties. Always work together and be willing to help one another, but never confuse consensus with a 50/50 split.
- Know your customers on a personal basis, solicit input and discuss tradeoffs of various improvements. Never react negatively to a proposed solution because the result may require more work on your part. Keep your motivation clear by always making the primary objective to satisfy your downstream customers.

- Similarly, always be willing to provide honest feedback to the preceding person or work center as to what they can do to make your job easier. Use this unilateral communication to eliminate waste and bring bottlenecks to surface.
- Realize that a great team must consist of people with varying talents, views and backgrounds. People with varied talents compliment each other, if they can talk through their differences and work for consensus.
- When providing criticism, limit comments to the deficiency in the process and depersonalize the discussion.

WORK TO ANTICIPATE AND AVOID PROBLEMS:

- Talk about little issues before they mushroom and become big problems. Remember that once we have allowed the little problems to fester, they will aggravate us and we will become emotional. Once that happens, rational thought disappears and compromise or consensus are nearly impossible to achieve.
- Always define Acceptable Quality Limits. We must be aware of and prepared to deal with the hard-to-define characteristics, such as aesthetical quality. Anticipate gray areas and communicate our criteria for acceptance prior to the time of a crucial decision.
- Be consistent in your decision-making and practices. Remember that most people tend to be skeptics and are looking for the contradictions or inconsistencies in our decision-making and daily practices.

REMEMBER THAT COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL:

- Be prepared to walk on the edge and take risks. Be cognizant of rules, regulations and laws, but also be so obsessed with the idea of doing the right thing, that you never let these restrict your ability to communicate with your people.
- Treat people with respect and be honest. Most often people are not upset with what is happening. It is more often because that they were not informed of what would happen, and, thus, feel like victims of circumstances. Be aware that sometimes the people who appear to be dissatisfied with their jobs are really dissatisfied with their personal situation. Gaining the confidence of these people presents one of the greatest challenges we face.
- Eliminate the deadly sins of Pride and Ego. Pride often prohibits us from admitting we are wrong. Ego restricts our ability to listen to and understand the needs of others.
- We will always receive what we project in our communication with others. If we are positive, energetic and goal-oriented, we will inspire those qualities in others.

ALWAYS DO THE APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP:

- Invert the 80/20 rule. Often we feel like we have done our jobs when a process is defined, a solution is provided or a direction is given. Our jobs are only 20% complete at this point. The difficult 80% is to persistently follow through to make sure people understand the process, the solution offered is appropriate or that the directions are being followed.
- Be available and willing to listen to people's concerns. People will be willing to give process improvements a chance to succeed if you show concern for their situation.
- Be humble enough to recognize when things are not going well and flexible enough to employ a new strategy in attempt to further improve our business processes.

Keep in mind the Guiding Principles and Ideals outlined above. In the heat of the battle, our character is measured by our ability to never lose sight of that of which we hold most important. Communicate as openly as possible, seize every learning experience and always maintain the drive to improve.

