

News Release

Developing a World Class Maintenance Organization

How to Develop a Top Notch Maintenance Program

Waverly, IA- (January 2009) Developing a world class maintenance organization is not hard in theory but application is a whole different story. There are some basic rules that need to be in place before a true world class maintenance organization can be developed. My goal in writing this article is to place a template on the internet for maintenance managers to read, evaluate, and tailor for their organization to work toward the pinnacle of efficiency.

Rule Number 1) Philosophical and Theoretical Shift

To achieve best practice maintenance results, there must be a technological and organizational shift in the way organizations do business. Both technological and organizational shifts need to happen at the same time in order to achieve sustained results. Without this simultaneous change, the system will not work and the organization will not achieve a lasting result. The implementation of a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) will require a technological change that is supported by upper level management and organizational policies and procedures will have to support the CMMS program that was put in place. Without managements support, the best system in the world will fail!

Rule Number 2) Understanding Change

People generally fear change and are resistant to it. That is why they must understand change and why the change is happening. Only those that are willing to change can expect to achieve desired results. Personnel will need to practice highly disciplined plans of action that have been agreed upon by upper level management. Bold changes need to be implemented and overseen. Make sure to inspect what you expect. One of the most common causes is failing to implement good policy and procedural changes.

Rule Number 3) Teamwork

All operational and support personnel need to be informed of the plan and its affects on each individual. They need to participate in the process so they can gain ownership of their new duties. Personnel who understand and agree with a process are more likely to cooperate with it. Teamwork throughout the realignment process is critical to achieving success.

Rule Number 4) Training

A specific training program must be developed covering all aspects of the proposed changes. Training and progress meetings are necessary for implementation. Training sessions must be presented to personnel in a way that they understand the changes. Use practical training methods and have ongoing training while standards are being fully established. People need to understand what their part is in the system and why they are playing that part. At least one individual in the organization should be assigned the role of trainer. That person will need to troubleshoot any problems that arise and adjust accordingly. Roles should be assigned and policy and procedures should be put in place. Formalized roles should be documented and critiqued for continuous improvement.

Rule 5) Asset Management

Assets are what makes an organization. Assets are people and things that are of great value. Managing assets can be easily done with a CMMS. These computerized maintenance management systems are capable of providing a great deal of order and reliability. They provide order for work requests, preventative maintenance, inventory control, and scheduling, and numerous other maintenance related tasks.

Rule 6) Parts Inventory

Inventory is a double edged sword that on one hand provides safety for having parts on hand to fix valuable assets but on the other hand represents money that is tied up in items the organization is not using for production of goods or services. The balance of inventory can only be achieved after accurate records are kept and predicting optimal inventory levels becomes close to what is actually needed when it is actually needed but with out un-necessary risk.

Rule 7) Accountability

Someone must be held responsible. It's called the "Chain of Command." This phrase is stolen from the military in part because they use it so successfully. There is a hierarchy of positions. In every case but the very top and bottom someone is responsible for things above that position and below that position. Even the top and bottom have responsibilities to up hold. A system without accountability is not sustainable. Even the best systems fail without enforcement of rules and regulations. Remember that effort is noble but results count.

Rule 8) Continuous Improvements

World class maintenance organizations do not happen overnight. They are the results of hard work, dedication, research, and development. The world is a dynamic place and a static maintenance program will be outdated by tomorrow. We need to focus on best practice techniques and how to improve our current operations. The key to much of this is tracking what we do. I recommend using a computerized maintenance management system to organize, track, and evaluate your maintenance department. Once detailed records are established, the continuous improvement stage can begin and you will be well on your way to a world class maintenance organization.

For more information on computerized maintenance management systems, please visit www.performancemms.com or call (319) 352-3693.