



Preventive Maintenance Continuous Improvement Strategies: How do You Maintain the Effectiveness?

This month we will discuss the sometimes mundane and boring Preventive Maintenance (PM) program. Everybody understands: the importance, most everyone has something that looks like a PM program; the majority says it works well and increases the value performance of the assets being inspected, adjusted, and lubricated. The problem I see as I visit facilities and plants across the nation, is very few organizations have a disciplined process in place to validate the success of the program and have the ability to justify the expense to manage and operate the program.

Let us first talk about the basic PM program. To be successful you need these five basic components:

1. All critical equipment has been identified by priority.
2. Check lists and procedures for the PM have been written.
3. A yearly schedule (assuming a calendar-based program) has been developed.
4. Appropriate detail has been infused. Not just check pump, but what to check in detail.
5. Performance measurement to determine the effectiveness of your schedule. Percent late or on time PMs. Measured monthly or weekly.

If you have the above in place you are better than most of the organizations in the world. So, if you have determined you are pretty good; then let's go to the next level: **How do you make it a great program?**

The first step is the basic performance measurement, percent on time PMs. If you have less than 1-2% late PMs, you are doing pretty well. If you don't, then there is not much point in going on to the next level. But let's assume you are, so let's see what is next.

Once you get to this level you will start to realize pretty quickly a PM program is never finished. You figure out that there is *always* something else to check, inspect, or adjust to make the process and the asset function better. Here is a list of things you should be doing or at least thinking about for the future.

1. Audit 10% of all PMs (I would include all work orders as well). Are they accurate, complete, what kind of comments are you getting from technicians, is everything being done, are they signed by the craftsman, etc.
2. How many corrective work orders do you generate during each PM? Too high or too low?
3. How many corrective work orders do you get within 30 days of PM completion? Should be none!
4. If you find no discrepancies during a PM, do you consider changing the frequency?

The key is to audit, analyze, and adjust your program for continuous improvement. You are never finished making it a World Class Program!