Master Plan into a Working Reality

Project and work planning tends to be very difficult for most people. There are many reasons for this but two of the biggest reasons are the lack of logical thinking and, probably the biggest reason is, that is hard or appears to be hard. Yes, it requires a significant amount of time and a little hard work. Everything we do will always turn out to be more successful if we have some sort of a project or work plan in place.

In this tip I will focus on what I call the Master Plan. I use the master plan term when describing the process of designing and implementing the process which will take your maintenance organization from its current state and culture and move it towards ‘Mike’s World’. If you’re not completely familiar with Mike’s World, I would recommend you go back and browse through the 150 plus white papers and tips of the month on our website to get a good understanding of what makes me tick.

Below I have listed and described the six key components which are critical to have if you want to turn your master plan into a reality.

1. **What is the end point?** The first thing to do in any master plan is to understand what the desired outcome of the plan is. You must have dreams and goals in order to put a workable plan together. I would recommend assessing where you are today and then develop what you want your organization to look like in 3-5 years. Remember if you don’t know where you are now and don’t know where you are going…..any road will take you there.

2. **Task list** – The next step is to develop a task list. This is a list which can be developed with a variety of techniques like….brain storming. The goal is to list all of the possible details and tasks needed to be put in place to accomplish the final goal. A simple example is a task labeled to require well-written work orders for all work completed by technicians. This task will also lead you into listing additional tasks just to accomplish the easy one of writing work orders.
   - Define what a well written work order looks like
   - Define who will be writing work orders
   - Who is going to teach employees how to write good work orders?
   - What device will be used to enter them?
     - Pencil and paper or handhelds?
   - Who is responsible for inspecting and approving work orders?

As you see, one simple task has now grown into numerous tasks that must be resolved in order to accomplish the task of writing work orders.

3. **Responsible person** – A member of your team must be assigned as the owner of the task. This person will lead and accomplish the task. They **must** be held accountable to complete this task per the agreed time frame.
4. **Task schedules and deadlines** – Each task needs a start date and a finish date. Make sure these dates are realistic and doable. All goals you establish for your team must be obtainable! If your goals are not realistic then your program will become the program of the month and it will ultimately fail.

5. **Master Plan champion** – The plan champion is someone who is assigned as the project manager or the person responsible for keeping the master plan on schedule. This person must also have the appropriate authority to ensure the plan stays on schedule and team members held accountable.

6. **Review and follow up** – Review and status meetings **must** be held on a regular basis. This is critical to keeping everything on schedule.

Following these six easy steps will ensure your final end product will turnout as you planned. Having a well-designed and managed plan is the only way to ensure a great final product.

See you next month!