



Tips for a Well-Designed Weekly Maintenance Meeting

To meet or not to meet, that is the question. Many organizations struggle with the concept of planning and scheduling the maintenance work load. And, they continually look for the 'silver bullet' to solve all of the day-to-day chaos and reactive problems that face them with what appears to be no end in sight. I suggest and try to implement "Mike's World" with all of its world class principles and, in some minds, the 'pie in the sky' principles that will transform them from a culture of chaos with mottos of "if it ain't smoking it ain't broken" to we need to "maintain assets in a like new condition". To many this seems pretty simple but to the organization that is struggling with workloads, manpower issues, and budget concerns the Mike's World Culture is totally out of the question.

At this point I try to switch from the Mike's World mentality to one of let's get back to the basics and try to develop some fairly simple strategies that will allow them to begin to bring some order and stability to the daily life of constant chaos.

The solution is pretty simple actually; we need to find a way to begin communicating to the maintenance team and hopefully the operations of manufacturing teams' three basic things:

1. What happened last week
2. What is happening this week, and
3. What do we expect will happen next week

You can accomplish all three of these with one weekly meeting held towards the end of the week. You will be surprised how successful these meeting will become and what a dramatic affect they will have on the performance of the maintenance and operations organizations.

I am sure some of you are thinking this is way too simple to provide any significant improvement to my organization. But what you need to keep in mind is that communication, or the lack of communication, is the root of most problems. Even if you don't have all of the typical maintenance bells and whistles, like a well running work order management system with work order planning and scheduling, you can still make a significant difference in the amount of daily chaos just by having a weekly meeting.

The key is to establish a weekly meeting which is held on the same day and time each week with no exceptions. I mean no exceptions! Once you set it up and schedule it everyone must attend unless they send you a death certificate or a doctor's note stating they had a major organ removed. I am sure this sound excessive but the weekly maintenance planning and scheduling is without a doubt the most important meeting a maintenance department will hold each week.

So what do you talk about in the meeting? Keep it simple, keep it short, and stay on task. Don't let it turn into a bitch session with everyone complaining about everything under the sun. And always have a good written agenda. The key here is 'written'.

1. Discuss the results of last week's work and briefly talk about the good and the problems.
2. Talk about what's going on this week, is it going well or are there challenges yet to overcome?



3. Review plans for the next week to ensure everything is in place. Hopefully making it an easy and quiet maintenance week.
4. Talk about next week +1, +2, +3, etc. always looking to the future to ensure your team(s) is prepared and ready to handle the challenges.

The bottom-line is if you establish an organized and consistent method to discuss past, current, and future performance you will witness a significant improvement in the maintenance department's performance as well as the organization you support. Remember, once you establish the meeting time and place it is **always held and never canceled!**