



Undercover Maintenance Boss Part II

Over the years I have observed this to be one of the biggest problems in facility and manufacturing maintenance, we just assume our employees will perform just like we want them to do with little or no contact with us. Guess what, it won't work and it must be fixed if you have any prayer of improving your quality, efficiency, safety, and cost.

Remember last month I gave you one item to focus on that will provide more time for the supervisors and managers to be in the field and that was controlling the meeting load. The tip was that all meeting requests had to be approved by their direct supervisor which hopefully assists in weeding out the junk meetings or at least control how many of your supervisors attend at one time. Why not send only one and then have them communicate the information.

Here are a few more tips and questions you can ask that may give you an opportunity to increase the floor or field time:

- Conduct your own mini time study for each manager under your direction
 - Have them fill out a simple spread sheet that you develop of all of them
 - Each sheet must be turned in each day(don't wait until the end of the week or month)
 - Ensure the numbers and codes are all the same for easy tabulation
- Lead by example!
 - Are you in the field? Why not, too many meetings!
 - Mark your calendar each week and or day for walk around time. Stick to it!
 - Do you feel comfortable in the field talking to employees and customers?
 - Are you organized? Remember they follow the leaders example
- Ask yourself, is the work they are doing commiserate with their pay and skill level?
 - How much of their work is clerical?
 - How much is spent ordering or researching parts?
 - The bottom line is, how much time do they spend doing work beneath their pay grade or skills?
- Ask yourself, do they want to be in the field?
 - Do they feel comfortable in the field with employees?
 - Do or did they have the same skill experience as their employees?
 - Are they appropriately dressed to be in the field? A sign they don't want to be there.
 - Do they get along with their employees?
- Are they unorganized?
 - When was the last time they had Time Management training?
 - Can you assist with organizing their day?
 - Require written schedules, Gantt charts, list of current assigned tasks
 - Require them to discuss all assigned tasks in your weekly staff meeting
- Are they located in the same area as their subordinates?
 - Is their office located with their employees? Why not?

The above list of questions and things to do looks and sounds simple on the surface but in actuality it can be quite daunting. All of you know how to eat an elephant right? - One bite at a time. Pick



the problem apart little by little. Don't change everything at once or you will never figure out what happen. Start with the mini time study, analyze it, and then develop a plan to fix the problem.

Remember don't go "Undercover Boss" but be on the floor, talk to your people, and clients. The problem normally is right under your nose.