



EPICENTRAL

A Newsletter from Epicenter Development Group
highlighting ideas that improve organizations

Welcome to Epicenter Development Group's newsletter, EPICentral. The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight fundamental ideas that have helped organizations develop and maintain great manufacturing and service operations. We hope that you find our EPICentral newsletter helpful, and we would welcome your comments on its content.

Preventive Maintenance – Optimizing Your Performance

Could you imagine forgoing the routine oil changes on your new car? Like with your personal automobile, preventative maintenance on manufacturing equipment can help to avoid costly repair bills. In addition, the cost of preventative maintenance often pays for itself in better equipment performance. Most people won't skip fluid changes on their personal vehicles, and it is because the consequences for neglect are well known and very expensive. What kind of maintenance procedures does your workplace have to ensure their equipment's performance? If your operation is suffering from unplanned downtime, excessive machine repair bills, or high scrap rates from machine failures – your *maintenance* program may need some *maintenance*.

The following steps are a general review of how to set up and/or evaluate a preventive maintenance program:

1. Start by making a list of the manufacturing equipment in your operation.
2. Identify your equipments' needs:
 - A good starting point for this is to check the equipment manuals for a maintenance schedule. If you require more detailed information, we recommend contacting the equipment manufacturer directly.
 - After you have a routine schedule established, an additional step that can be taken is to install monitoring devices on the equipment. These monitoring devices could be set to alarm when an adjustment or replacement is required. One example of this would be an amp meter on a saw blade motor – when the blade gets dull, the force it takes to pull the blade through the product goes up and the motor amperage increases. This increase in amps signifies that the blade needs to be sharpened or changed.
3. Once the equipment maintenance needs are identified, the next step is to set up a

system for providing the maintenance services. This system should be very robust and include some level of accountability for the work to be completed.

For example, if it is time to change the saw blade mentioned above, the person responsible might check the new blade out of a parts crib and assign it to the particular machine so that cost can be tracked. After the replacement is complete, the old part could then be checked into the parts crib attendant for recycling, verification that the work has been done, and that the part did need to be replaced.

4. The last thing that you should consider in your preventive maintenance program is a method for tracking cost. It is important to track both part and labor cost so that future improvements can be easily justified.

Considerations/Pitfalls to Avoid:

1. Make It Happen - The hardest part in starting or maintaining a preventative maintenance program is ensuring that the preventive actions are being taken. This might be due to the fact that there are usually no immediate consequences for skipping or delaying the maintenance; but, just like our personal automobiles, the consequences are there and will eventually happen.
2. Schedule - When scheduling preventive maintenance, make sure to take full advantage of the ability to schedule the work on your terms instead of on the machine's terms. What this means is that when you are scheduling preventive maintenance, schedule it for the off shift or during shift changes when production labor can be scheduled to minimize the total cost of the work.
3. Repair Bills – The goal in tracking repair costs is to have data for machine improvement projects. While it is also true that you can track maintenance performance, this can sometimes lead to a reduction in work quality since only the quantity of work is being measured. The more detail you put into tracking your repair costs, the easier it will be to justify future improvement projects – just make sure that everyone is on board with the quality of work and not just quantity.

If you recognize that your *maintenance* program needs *maintenance*, please contact us today. We can help implement the long-term solutions that will keep you competitive in tomorrow's market.

Next Steps

If you would like more information on this topic or other similar types of tools, please contact Bill Proctor with your request at wproctor@epicentergroup.com or 216-702-0952. You can also find previous issues of EPICentral at [Newsletters](#).

Mr. Proctor also speaks on a variety of problem-solving and system design topics that can help companies significantly increase the success and profitability of their businesses. If you are interested in having Bill speak at one of your upcoming meetings/events or would like more information on any of the speaking topics, please visit [Speaker Services](#) or you can

emailsales@epicentergroup.com.

Epicenter Development Group is a unique consulting firm that seamlessly integrates the disciplines of Systems Engineering and Organizational Analysis & Development to create practical design solutions to your toughest challenges. It is on the cutting edge of problem-solving solutions and the creator of a unique process called GreenRoom Engineering. This process adds greater value and cost savings for clients as compared to traditional engineering methods.

William Proctor, Epicenter's founder and president, has provided services around the country to more than 100 companies consisting of a variety of organizations; and Epicenter continues to grow as a resource for firms of all sizes.

To learn more about Epicenter Development Group, visit our website:

www.epicentergroup.com

Epicenter News

We are happy to announce that we have opened a second office in Perrysburg, Ohio.



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