

# BREAKING BOUNDARIES

for Operating Excellence



Revised:  
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Shift-to-Shift Cooperation is "IN" ...  
Shift-to-Shift Competition is "OUT"

Issue: 148

## Goal

In multi shift operations, managers must direct all employees' actions to improve the performance of the department, not just their shift. Performance of a shift is important; however, business success comes from the improvements of the larger organizational entity.



## Conventional Wisdom Shattered

It is time to dump the notion that shift-to-shift competition is good.

Competition is good, in fact, competition is great, but let's be sure we know the competitor. Employees must only compete with the rival business down the road or across the ocean. Competitive energies between shifts, created by well intentioned managers, must be redirected to the real competitor.

Multi shift departments will burst with new levels of performance when shifts stop competing with each other and start cooperating, supporting and assisting each other.

## Attention! Multi Shift Operations



Shift-to-Shift  
Competition



Shift-to-Shift  
Cooperation

Let's face it, all shift managers/supervisors want to look good and, above all, want to look better than the other shifts. Anyone who has spent time around multi shift operations know that the performance of a shift is indeed a function of:

- the shift's actual performance ... their efficiency and effectiveness
- the poor condition of "things" left for them by their preceding shift

*(continued ...)*

# Shift-to-Shift Cooperation is "IN" ... Shift-to-Shift Competition is "OUT"

- the extent to which they were "set up" for success by their preceding shift



- the time and energy taken (or not taken) by them to "set up" the following shift
- the skills, talents, experience and motivation of employees on their shift

Any shift can look good by doing the easy jobs, leaving the difficult task for other shifts, not performing the preventative maintenance, not cleaning up, not resupplying raw materials, not refueling equipment and NOT TAKING THE TIME TO SET UP THE NEXT SHIFT FOR SUCCESS.

## Call to Action ... Get All Shift Employees Dedicated to Departmental Success

Have your department Performance Improvement (PI) Team identify a list of actions that employees, including supervisors, can start doing (or stop doing) that would have a favorable impact on all shifts. The department's PI Team must be populated with employees from all shifts.

The following is a quick list of actions to foster shift-to-shift cooperation (beyond ideas that will emerge from your department PI Team):

- Managers responsible for multi shift operations meet with all employees to explain the change in direction from shift competition to shift cooperation and the value of mutual support between shifts.

- Establish well-defined and agreed upon standards (checklist) for each shift to follow to "set up" the next shift for success.



- Managers responsible for multi shift operations formally evaluate the extent to which each shift actually "sets up" the next shift for success ... this will put the spotlights on the right behavior.

- Post charts and graphs of the total department performance and communicate the performance of the total department. It is important for managers to collect and evaluate the operating performance data by shift, but only post and communicate the department level results.

- Recognize and celebrate department level operating performance success! It's easy ... It's fun ... It will drive continued department success.



- Create a level playing field for all shifts to excel. Balance the workforce (including supervision) to ensure relatively similar skills, abilities, motivation, length of service, etc. are present on each shift. It is a recipe for departmental under performance to have all the senior, experienced employees on the day shift and all the new, less trained employees working the night shift(s). Balancing the workforce between shifts may be a huge paradigm swing. Some companies may not have the "steel" to make it happen. It is time to turn off the traditional (length of service) methods of assigning employees to shifts.

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- On occasion, reassign a small number of employees from one shift to another. This approach, if implemented properly, will infuse different ideas for betterment. This may be done on a temporary or permanent basis. This reassignment allows employees to experience first hand the knowledge, guidance, and performance standards of a different supervisor.



Leaders with a fierce passion for improving operating performance throughout a company will design and launch an Incentive Pay System driven by the success of the company ... not the department .... not the shift.

*Bovino Consulting Group is available to help design, develop, and train your Performance Improvement Teams and provide them with an effective problem solving process that delivers results, not activity.*

Thanks for reading,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vince".

Vince Bovino  
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