

The Finish Strong™ monthly e-newsletter helps business leaders examine issues important to taking operational performance to world-class levels.

Finish Strong™ is about developing an appropriate Operations strategy, and effective execution, dotting operational i's and crossing operational t's as you go.

Your company cannot afford to be sloppy if you want it to be great.

### **WHERE'S THE BEEF?**

Chinese toys. The all-American meat. Is nothing safe anymore? For years we've heard that quality is assumed; that it is the price of admission to the market. That success requires much more: shorter lead-times, competitive prices, etc. With so many different companies involved in the flurry of recent recalls one has to wonder. Because the market assumes quality, have our supply chains decided to do the same thing?

High-flying dunkers still need to hit free throws to win. Wide receivers who make the spectacular one-handed grab need to catch the routine pass. Manufacturers that have reduced lead times, mastered mass customization, and work closely with the supply chain to control costs still have to make good product.

Crossing operational t's and dotting operational i's may sound easy, but it is not. Your company cannot afford to be sloppy if you want it to be great. Sound familiar? It should. Finish Strong.™

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO ROBERT A. GADDIE**

Bob Gaddie has been named a Presidential Rank Award 2007 recipient. Gaddie, Commissioner for the Bureau of Labor Statistics and big brother of yours truly, is one of 333 executives and senior professionals across all federal agencies to receive the award. To win a Presidential Rank Award, employees must be nominated by the head of their agency, evaluated by groups of private citizens and approved by the president.

### **NICE AND CHEAP**

Why do so many owners of small manufacturers believe that they can't afford to hire personnel with the experience and education that larger companies employ? Not as many, sure, but why accept undertrained and undereducated? Entirely too often I hear, "but she's nice..." or "but he's cheap; what can we really expect?"

Good clay that can be developed and shaped requires someone with the skills and expertise to do so. Otherwise it is wasted. Are the hundreds of decisions made daily in your company in the hands of people you trust with the future of your company? Nice and cheap can be cruel and expensive.