

*If you know a company — customer, supplier, friend, or your own — that could benefit from improved operations, let us know.*

*Your best interest is our best interest.*

The Finish Strong® monthly e-newsletter is for business leaders who recognize Operations as a strategic function that creates competitive advantage, profitability and brand loyalty in the marketplace.

### **SKILLED WORKER SUCCESSION PLANNING**

Many manufacturers must start planning now to overcome a fast-approaching and critical challenge: the impending retirement of skilled workers. The recession has exacerbated the problem by moving many low seniority (younger) workers out of the industry completely. Most are not waiting by the phone for the opportunity to move back into manufacturing.

How many of your skilled workers will be retiring in the next 5 years? Don't wait 4.5 years to begin thinking about replacing their knowledge and experience.

The Plan Do Check Act (PDCA) cycle is helpful here.

#### *Plan*

- Identify both the types and quantities of the skill sets you expect to need.
- Then identify which skills you have now and any predictable changes to that status (eg, retirements).
- Then work with your employees to develop a transition plan that reflects their interests and company needs. Identify appropriate sources of external resources to fill gaps.

Don't forget the DCA parts, but be sure to do the P first!

### **IT'S GETTING LATE**

As signs of economic improvement begin to show, smart companies are positioned to grow market share and profits. They persistently invested in that positioning during the downturn rather than hunkering down in ostrich mode. Today they continue work to improve productivity and throughput as the rumblings of recovery begin.

If you opted not to invest in improving processes and people during the downturn, you've fallen behind the competition. If you don't establish real focus on it now, you may drop out of the race as you see chances of finishing "in the money" fading fast. It's getting late.

### **FINISH STRONG®**

#### *The Starting Pistol*

ABDULLAH WASAY, an Afghan pharmacist:

"Americans are saying that with their planes they can see an egg 18 kilometers away, so why can't they see the Taliban?"

#### *The Tape*

Rebecca Morgan:

"It's one skill set to see something after it is pointed out; it's quite another to recognize important deviations from "what should be" in a complex environment. Learning to see is a critical part of success."

### **REACH FULCRUM VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**

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