

*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.

## THE POWER OF PARANOIA

Somewhere in the world, there is a company like yours. Its management team is as smart; its products and services are as valuable; its workers as skilled, smart and hard working. If their understanding of your markets and customers, if their business and production processes become better than yours, what happens to your company?

Many businesses don't believe that other organization exists. A few employees may believe it, but not the critical mass required to create the will for unrelenting improvement.

That company always exists. They may be in a different industry right now, or expert at a different technology, or in a different part of the world, or developing in a garage, but they are out there.

Organizational excellence is not a program, a project, an effort, or an undertaking. It is a way of life. It is a value, a commitment, a conviction. If your organization doesn't come by it naturally, the power of paranoia may propel you forward. Something has to.

## REPLACE CAR WITH ETP

A Corrective Action Request (CAR) system exists in most companies, if only because larger customers require it. All too often, a CAR is initiated upon receipt of a customer complaint. The customer wants some evidence that you are doing something about the problem, so he won't experience it again.

Unfortunately, most CAR systems reflect empty promises that wouldn't eliminate the problem even if the

corrective action were permanently followed. They are a waste of time, money and effort. But they shouldn't be.

Pull out a random samples of CARs 6-24 months old from your company's files. Has the reported problem been completely eliminated? If so, you're better than most. If not, replace your CAR system with an Eliminate the Problem (ETP) focus. One that ensures REAL root cause has been identified and addressed, even if it takes months. One that ensures a temporary countermeasure is just that, temporary, and is not confused with actually eliminating the problem. One that requires effective follow up weeks and months later to ensure the solution is effective.

If you're going to invest resources in CAR, you might as well make it matter.



## THE REBIRTH OF MANUFACTURING

Rebecca Morgan met with Ohio Governor Strickland in October discuss his support of the Association for Manufacturing Excellence (AME) commitment to the "Rebirth of Manufacturing in North America." Strickland, Ohio Senator Voinovich, Virginia's Governor and Senators and numerous other state and national elected leaders have written letters reiterating their commitment to manufacturing. Manufacturing is changing, but it is NOT dead.

## **MORGAN'S CONTRIBUTION ACKNOWLEDGED**

In the December 4, 2009 APICS newsletter, Abe Eshkenazi (CEO of APICS) acknowledged the valuable work of Subject Matter Experts (Morgan is 1 of 6) in enhancing the relevance of APICS certification and body of knowledge. The Strategic Management of Resources team completely redesigned the body of knowledge and exam content to reflect current and relevant thinking in strategic operations. To aid the education process for both APICS instructors and students, the team also worked with Prentis Publishing to create a custom published book containing the spectrum of required resources for the course. Instead of complaining about weaknesses in the APICS body of knowledge, Rebecca is doing something about it.

## **FINISH STRONG®**

*The Starting Pistol*

Aristotle, Greek Philosopher

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

*The Tape*

Rebecca Morgan:

“Work habits are as difficult to change as are personal habits, similarly requiring reinforcement, support, and motivation. Provide that environment to make excellence an organizational habit.”

## **REACH FULCRUM VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**

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