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A President

Cross Trained Employees Equate to Higher Profits

By Angela A. Aldrich

How many times do you take time off from work only to return to a disaster? It has been said most people work an extra 25 to 30 hours the week before a vacation and spend another 60 to 70 hours playing catch up when they return. Why does this happen? All too often companies rely on a single person to do a job(s). Of course, this usually means nothing gets attended to when that individual is out. Often, productivity comes to a halt.

The reality of today's marketplace is that individual employees rarely experience an equitable distribution of labor. Every company sees it. One person, or department, does a majority of the work while others maintain their own small piece of the overall puzzle. There are two major points in why

cross training doesn't occur: people become possessive of their duties and fear they are easily replaced if others can do their job, and managers and upper level staff are unequipped to complete the training process.

“Department managers or executives have to be able to see and explain the big picture...”

Many middle managers can not, and have not, mastered the jobs they oversee. Anyone who is in a position where they could potentially be training others should have an elevated skill level at every task they oversee. Department managers or executives have to be able to see and explain the big picture to their workforce in order to train them properly. They have to see where each particular task contributes to the entire process.

The main benefit, which is an overall plus for anyone in business, is that cross trained employees often have a greater understanding of the business as a whole. If they are aware of the workload in all the processes, not just their own, they

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YOUR BUSINESS MIGHT NEED A3 IF.....

- You ask to not be interrupted and then wonder why no one is calling you.
- Your desk reminds you of demolished building footage.

YOUR HOME MIGHT NEED A3 IF.....

- Your shoes are in a pile in the closet, and the challenge is to find one that belongs to the pair you want to wear, and then find the other one.
- Your separates are in separate rooms.

GUEST SPOTLIGHT

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For more information on this life-changing seminar, contact Red Daisy Training and Development at 717-533-7226 or 717-579-7871 or inquire at reddaisy@lmf.net.

Cross Trained Employees Equate to Higher Profits *(continued from page 1)*

can be more apt to troubleshoot or assist in cross referencing tasks when needed. It is almost a built-in quality control factor. People can also see the big picture while recognizing the effect their particular role has in making the greater goal a successful one. Being part of a workflow sequence makes their "part" more significant than if they had no scope of view outside their own particular tasks. People will also become more accepting of the accountability of the quality of their work. It is much less easy to "pass the buck" when they have a greater understanding of how and who their shortcuts affect in the workforce. Employees who are cross trained often have a sense of shared responsibility for the successful completion of a task or project. They also are less likely to pass blame when the ball is dropped. This sense of accountability is not only toward management or their superior, but to each other as a team.

There is also the stress factor. Most people experience stress on the job because they are either overworked or do not have a clear understanding of what is really expected of them.

"Employees who are cross trained often have a sense of shared responsibility for the successful completion of a task or project."

Cross training can eliminate both of those issues to some degree. It allows you to reiterate your expectations of each employee in a non threatening environment as well as give them the opportunity to ask questions they might otherwise not bring to your attention. As a manager or executive,

you also can use the opportunity to really see how the employee defines their own task and encourage change without reprimand.

How does this theory create harmony and perfection in the work place? It doesn't. What it will do is make your workforce more productive and drive your company's bottom line up. When your employees achieve the overall picture of how individual efforts impact your business, the workforce as a whole can increase productivity by creating a "streamlined" pipeline, and increase profits. ■

**If you would like more information about cross training techniques or have management training questions answered please contact Angela A. Aldrich at aaldrich@a3oc.com or 717-608-4994 for a comprehensive consultation.*

A³ TIP OF THE MONTH

Stay put! Prepare to stay confined to the room in which you are organizing. If you leave, you will be distracted by things in other areas and lose valuable time.

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