

# Turbo Leadership Systems™

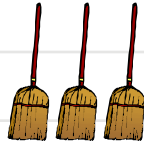
# The **TURBO** **Charger**

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Issue 266

To our clients and friends

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## Clean Sweep



Larry W. Dennis, Sr.  
President,  
Turbo Leadership  
Systems©

*Keep your  
agreements  
empowers you  
and your team.*

Larry told our Leadership Development LAB a fabulous story, one we can all learn from. Larry ordered 36 brooms from one of his key suppliers. Why 36 brooms? His company had just launched the Continuous Improvement Process, which includes a commitment from the employees of the company to get their plant clean and keep it that way.

One of the contrasts often made between American manufacturing firms and Japanese manufacturing firms is the cleanliness of the workplace. This same issue was one of the focuses of an NBC special. One of the Japanese steel mills they highlighted kept their place so clean a person could "eat right off the floor."

The upcoming visit from some important customers encouraged a rally cry from Larry's company - a great opportunity to kickoff this commitment to cleanliness.

They decided to give their team all the tools necessary to make the cleanup job as easy and effective as possible. When Larry called his key supplier, who had proven reliable in the past, and asked for the special brooms, the supplier said, "We'll have them for you in a week." Well, a week went by, and there were no brooms and no follow-up contact. Larry called the supplier back and said, "Where are the brooms?" The supplier said, "Well, gee, haven't they arrived? Oh man, I'll check and get right back to you." The supplier failed to call back again. Finally, Larry ordered the brooms from another supplier, and they showed up in a couple of days.

The tragedy in this story is that this particular supplier espouses a belief in Total QualityMan-

agement (TQM) and had been "on the path to TQM" for the last 18 months. The truth is that, unless we keep our commitments to both our internal and external customers, we can never achieve TQM.

The first step towards TQM is keeping all commitments. If we can't keep our promises, we must follow back immediately and let our customer know (whether it's an internal or external customer) that we're not able to keep the commitments we've made. If appropriate, we should renegotiate a new deadline.

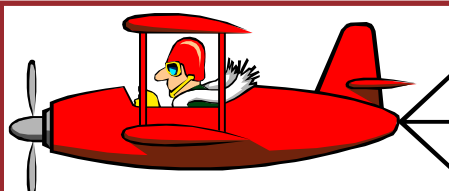
Why do we fail to get back and let others know that we can't complete our agreements? It is often because of fear, a poor follow-up and control system, or a lack of information.

If you are going to espouse TQM, it's extremely important that you make it clear to every member of your team that "we will keep our commitments, and we'll renegotiate deadlines when deadlines can't be met." As I point out in *Repeat Business - 6 Steps to Superior Customer Service*, "Excuses Don't Look Good On Me."

To achieve TQM, impeccable records of quality performance must be kept, including the number of promises made, percentage of goods shipped on time, backorders, merchandise requested you don't stock, and information needed that you weren't able to provide.

By tracking the percentage of promises fulfilled and striving to continually improve your performance, you build an empowered team that always delivers.

**ANNOUNCING TURBO'S**



**Leadership Development Lab  
(LDL)**

**OPEN CLASS ~ MARCH 2010**  
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