

The **TURBO** Charger

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To our clients and friends

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It Takes Risk to Improve



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Listen to those who want to improve your process and you will create a championship team

Frank, forklift operator for a wood products company in southern Oregon, told Session 5B of the Leadership Development Lab:

“About eight years ago while I was the night shift lathe operator for Weyerhaeuser Company in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The company had rebuilt the green end by putting in all new equipment including a new acclimated XY charger on the lathe. The job of the lathe operator now was to just watch the lathe run. If the automated system didn't work quite right, we were instructed to immediately hit the override and then make the appropriate adjustments.

I kept telling my supervisor that the roundup was not working correctly a lot of the time. Sometimes it would either put too much or not enough roundup to the chipper. There was an override button on the joystick to hold the gate open longer or close it faster, so I started to use it when the roundup wasn't working correctly on its own.

One night when I came to work the people on swing shift said that I was in a lot of trouble. I asked them why. The day before, the manager had the electricians put a counter on the button to see how many times I was using the override button.

This made me so mad, that they would go behind my back to put the counter in to catch me overriding the system instead of fixing the real problem. That night, the more I thought about it, the madder I got at what they had done.

This problem could have been prevented if we had communicated with each other. We could have worked together to solve this problem, and that would have increased recovery and production.

The lesson I learned from this experience is that without open defenseless communication, there is no possibility for synergistic teamwork. Without teamwork and open communication there is no chance of solving problems effectively and certainly no chance for continuous improvement.

The action I call you to take is to listen to those closest to the work and when you have an idea about how to improve any part of the process, share it. Communicate it professionally, clearly without attaching ridicule or sarcasm.

The benefit you will gain is a sense of committed teamwork. You will be a part of a continuous improvement process.” ###

Please forward this to friends, co-workers, customers or relatives who you feel might enjoy it.

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