

The Importance Of Metal Fabrication Management

Mike Bowlby, Owner, Mack Hills Metal Fabrication

Successful metal fabrication companies are always on a mission to improve their lead times to cut down on operating costs and to increase customer satisfaction.

Many managers may try to analyze what the company does or doesn't need, or which of the available suppliers might be cheaper and/or faster, yet provide them with their company's specific needs without sacrificing quality in their products.

As with any business, a metal fabrication company is only as efficient as its management. Because of this fact, metal fabrication management is very important in acquiring shorter lead times, and is sometimes the best way to improve these lead times is by increasing the efficiency of both management and their employees.

Employee Efficiency

There are endless amounts of ways that managers can increase the efficiency of their workers. Arguably the most important ways begin with training and organization. Supervisors must thoroughly train each employee on his or her job on a regular basis, and then follow up to make sure employees are performing up to that standard. The best way to produce the desired results from your employees is by giving them clear and concise instructions, so they have the tools and knowledge to follow.

It is also important to ensure that your employees can handle the ups and downs of the manufacturing floor. They must be prepared to show capacity on many machines in one day, and be able to completely handle the shop being at overcapacity in the next. Employees and management alike must be able to endure the stress of not being able to predict customer demand. The best way for management to ease this stress is by starting jobs before they are due so that when an urgent job does come in, they have the capacity to fulfill them with minimal stress.

Management Efficiency

It is important to note that every process starts in the office and works its way down and out. If management isn't doing their job effectively and efficiently, the rest of the operation will not be working up to its full potential. The longer every team member isn't performing their jobs at their fullest potential, whether it's in the office or on the workflow, the harder it will be to change their work ethic and procedures. People are creatures of habit and the longer someone goes on without improving their abilities, then the less likely they will improve altogether.

If issues like these do occur, it is the responsibility of the managerial team to

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change them. If management doesn't have the right efficiencies or necessary tools or procedures to improve their employees effectively, then something needs to change hierarchically or systematically. They need to become more resourceful or have greater tools, software or procedures to make this happen, especially if they want to keep up as leaders in their industry.

It is also important that management works closely and communicates with operations to maximize product and task flow through the shop to the customer. If management fails to keep up with these tasks, confusion and lack of productivity will soon hit the manufacturing floor. This is why metal fabrication management needs the proper tools and procedures for processing purchase orders in a fast and effective manner.

Our Perspective

At Mack Hills Metal Fabrication, we do a number of things to improve managerial and employee relationships, create efficient and effective workflows, and maintain customer satisfaction rates. We host barbeques that allow management and employees to socialize outside of work, which establishes stronger relationships between all of us. We offer bonuses to those performing at high levels, which improves workflows and reduces lead times. Other things include good interaction with employees on a daily basis. Workers stress is a function of good management. If employees know what is expected of them and these expectations are clearly communicated, then the result is a lack of stress and better workflows.

From what we've seen so far, it is just as important for metal fabrication managers to be efficient as it is for the employees to efficiently do their jobs. Without a hard working and dedicated managerial staff, your business is sure to begin a downward spiral. Ensure that your metal fabrication management has the company's best interest in mind, and your company is sure to succeed.

Mike Bowlby is the owner of Mack Hills Metal Fabrication, a Midwest metal fabricator located in Moberly, Mo. Visit their [website](#) [1] for more information.

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