



From reactive to a planned state: A clear roadmap

The maintenance department is one of the greatest levers of profitability any capital intensive organization has. An average of 40 to 50 percent of a capital intensive industry's operating budget is consumed by maintenance expenditure. However, many maintenance departments struggle with moving from a reactive state to a planned state where costs can continuously be reduced and reliability improved. This article outlines some key steps that must be enforced by maintenance managers if that bridge from reactive to planned maintenance is to be crossed.

The reactive state

Low equipment reliability often remains unmeasured as it can be masked by high equipment availabilities. However, under closer scrutiny, it can often be found equipment with high availabilities also breaks down frequently. Equally, a low MTTR (mean time to repair) can be misleading and indicate a situation in which a plant is failing, while inaccurate inventory planning means maintenance teams cannot make long-term plans in the necessary manner.

Under the above circumstances, the work force tends to become reactive by nature, which can be one of the most difficult areas to change as staffs typically take a great deal of pride in their ability to keep the plant running — and rightly so. However, the first step toward changing that state must be ensuring maintenance teams have clear guidelines that outline how maintenance work will be conducted. It is essential those guidelines are not only communicated but are also understood, and any gaps must be supported by coaching sessions.

Making the leap

Once teams are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, a clear definition of the work processes that will be used for maintenance work must be circulated. For example, a standard day for planners and schedulers could be agreed upon in order to be used as a framework, while the exact expectations and behaviors required to deliver high-quality work should be detailed. Scheduling software and further training sessions should be

conducted in order to support maintenance processes, again ensuring all members of the staff are clear on what is expected of them and when.

Key performance indicators (KPIs), which are both hierarchical and inter-linked, should then be agreed upon and communicated so the root causes of failure are easier to identify and address. Finally, follow-up rounds must all be in place so the effectiveness of the changes being implemented can be properly measured.

Measure effectiveness of changes

An active PMS (Performance Management System) should be put in place to clarify how management can monitor progress into the future. Regular performance review meetings must be set up to fine-tune the processes that have been installed and to analyze where changes need to occur. Once the meetings are underway, management can use KPIs to determine the gap between actual and expected achievement while also developing action plans to address issues or concerns highlighted by the system.

Finally, formal training sessions to introduce the principles of active supervision should be attended by management of all levels from across the plant. Following up those sessions with in-field coaching will ensure the processes, systems and definitions installed will remain in place and that changes will continue into the future.

The planned state

In this way, the reactive nature of many maintenance departments can be positively transformed into a well-planned process, which can be up to 15 to 25 percent more efficient. Wasted time in the form of waiting times for materials, equipment availability and the provision of inaccurate information will be eliminated, allowing the staff to carry out work without unnecessary intervention. A planned maintenance state is both possible and achievable, requiring only commitment to positive change and the necessary tools to ensure that change is sustainable.

For more information, visit www.tacook.com or call (919) 510-8142. ●

50 YEARS OF SERVICE
1963-2013

COASTAL SPECIALTY GAS

- INDUSTRIAL
- HIGH PURITY
- CALIBRATION GASES
- PORTABLE CYLINDERS
- GAS CONTROL EQUIPMENT

GAWDA
GASES AND WELDING DISTRIBUTORS ASSOCIATION

GA
GAS ASSOCIATION
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Distributor Safety Award

ISO 17025
ACCREDITED LABORATORY

COASTALWS.COM

T.A. Cook CONSULTANTS

ASSET PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

T.A. Cook Consultants, Inc. delivers measurable, sustainable business improvements in the petrochemical, refining, utilities and process industries.

Our blue chip client base trusts us to bring intellectual challenge, hands-on support and on-the-ground practical coaching to achieve significant and lasting change in diverse environments across 5 continents.

We work with your staff to...

- » Reduce Turnaround and Shutdown risk, cost and duration
- » Increase throughput/capacity
- » Reduce Maintenance costs and improve Maintenance effectiveness
- » Build/rebuild skills and competencies which have been lost or simply eroded

...considerably faster and with greater sustainability than if they were working by themselves.

T.A. Cook Consultants, Inc. | 919 510 8142 | info-us@tacook.com | www.tacook.com