How Can I Make My Sewing Operation More Efficient and Profitable?

Presented by Phil Freese

How addressing the basic's really does work!
It’s Not Rocket Science!
What has to be addressed in your sewing operations for you to be more efficient?
Whether your sewing operation makes apparel or non-apparel, it makes little difference! It’s how addressing the basic’s of your operation will make you more successful and ultimately more profitable!
I am assuming that we have the needed patterns, grading, spreading, and cutting capabilities needed. These are all important items and must also be addressed for your sewing operation to be successful.
What are those basic’s?

- Selecting The Right Sewing Machine, Attachments, And Work Aids For The Specific Operation.
- Proper Type And Amount of Operator Training
- Mechanic/Technician Training
- Spare Parts Program
- Preventative Maintenance Guidelines
- Established House Cleaning Rules
- Competitive Wages Along With An Established Environmental, Health, And Safety Program.
Selecting The Right Sewing Machine, Sewing Combination, Attachments, And Work Aids For A Specific Operation.

- What stitch type does my sewing machine have to be?
- Do I need a flat bed, cylinder bed, feed-off-the-arm?
- How much sewing capacity do I need? Will I be sewing light or heavy weight fabric?
- What type of sewing combination do I need? (Presser foot, feed dog, needle plate)
- Do I need a close coupled puller or metering device?
Selecting The Right Sewing Machine, Sewing Combination, Attachments, And Work Aids For A Specific Operation.
Selecting The Right Sewing Machine, Sewing Combination, Attachments, And Work Aids For A Specific Operation. (continued)

- Do I need a folder or an edge guide?
- Do I need a manual or automatic oiling system?
- What type of motor do I need? Do I need an automatic needle positioner, thread trimmer, and micro processor controls?
- You need to contact a competent sewing machine supplier who can help you answer these and many more questions as well as offer you ongoing support.
Proper Type And Amount of Operator Training

- Can we do pre-employment skills assessment?
- Is it better to use vestibule training or just move the new operator into the sewing line?
- Who is going to train the operator?
- Who is going to train the operator on the care and use of the sewing machine? Supervisor, trainer, mechanic?
- When do we know if the operator is going to be successful?
Mechanic/Technician Training, is it necessary?

- Do I need a mechanic/technician?
- Why do I need to get them training?
- Where can I get the needed mechanic/technician training?
- What happens if I invest in their training and then they leave me? What happens if you don’t invest and they stay?
- How long does this training take?
- Are you keeping records of the machine repair by mechanic?
Do I need a Spare Parts Program

- How far away are you from your machine and parts supplier? How high is your fed-ex bill?
- How many production machines do you have?
- Do you have any spare machines? Do they work?
- Where can I find an off the shelf spare parts program?
- Do you record parts used by machine and by each mechanic?
- Will the investment into spare parts save me money?
- Can I use this information to prioritize my machine replacement program?
Preventative Maintenance Program Guidelines & Responsibilities

- Why do I need a PM Program?
- Establish daily operator PM guidelines such as basic cleaning and oiling.
- Establish weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly mechanic/technician maintenance guideline.
- Identify date/time/person responsible for PM duties.
- Do we schedule PM duties for overtime hours so we do not disrupt production?
Establish House Cleaning Responsibilities and Timelines

- Who is responsible for cleaning the sewing machine?
- How should it be cleaned and how often?
- Who cleans the sew line?
- Who is responsible for keeping it clean?
- How does a clean sewing machine and a clean work environment save me money?
- Why Cleanliness and Quality are so important.
Competitive Wages Along With An Established Environmental, Health, And Safety Program will save you money!

- How should my operators be paid? Hourly or with an incentive program?
- How do I quantify my mechanic/technician skills and pay accordingly?
- Do all of my employees understand our health and safety programs? Do they comply?
- Have I taken care of my OSHA guidelines and are my MSDS available and up to date? Where are they?
Summary

- We have talked about a lot of issues but, only begun to cover all the questions that will arise as you grow and become more successful. We would have enjoyed going on to discuss other topics such as:
  - Manual sewing versus automation?
  - Stand up versus Sit Down workstations?
  - Mechanical differences and requirements between a progressive bundle versus modular or lean manufacturing systems?
- Maybe we can continue these discussions next time, until then Thanks for your participation today!
Thank you!

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