

Best Practices In Utilities and Maintenance Services Architectural Trades

Cabinet Makers, Inventory/Stock & Paint Finishers

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What are Best Practices?

Best Practices describe the optimum ways to perform a business process; they are a component or combination of component practices determined to be the most effective, practicable action steps in performing work; they make lasting contributions to improving quality of work life and services to customers. They are the means by which leading organizations have achieved top performance. They also serve as goals for other organizations striving for excellence.

Source: Anderson Consulting: Best Practices and Local Leadership Program, UNCHS (Habitat); Cooperative Extension, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, U of Nebraska, Lincoln/2-5-99).



Center for Organization Learning

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Adapting to Change Through Work Flow Processes “Millwork Projects”

Opportunity

When Tom Rumple became manager of three additional trades shops in Plant Operations two years ago, he experienced serious difficulties with the transition. To accommodate the needs of the customer, the amount of job requests, the diversity of trades and incorporation of effective work processes, new department goals had to be implemented. These goals, as well as the implementation of new technology, set the stage for Best Practices in the Architectural Trades group within Plant Operations at the University of Michigan

After eight months of less

than optimal productivity and performance issues with the new consolidated units, the staff decided to develop a plan of action that would change the way they were doing business. They acknowledged that adapting to the constant changes in their work environment necessitated a change in the workflow processes of the unit.

During the team evaluation process they identified the following root causes:

- ◆ The increase from a one shop operations to six shops
- ◆ A five member team to a fifteen member team
- ◆ The staff was spread too thin



Student Activities Building

- ◆ The shop was diversified in its new operations
- ◆ The need to increase production to keep up with demand
- ◆ Less time available to spend on estimates
- ◆ Lack of communication
- ◆ Disorganized paperwork
- ◆ No one knew what jobs were getting done
- ◆ Inefficiency with cost effective methods and work processes.

Plan of Action

In 1998, the Contracting and Architectural Trades department under the management of Paul Guttman made changes by restructuring units for best fit in the department. The following decisions were made:

- ◆ Reorganization of the units
- ◆ Operate as Enterprise
- ◆ Reduce recharge rates to customers
- ◆ Function efficiently as possible

The Cabinet shop, Lumber Inventory, Upholstery shop, Spray Finishers, the Glass shop and Sign shop were grouped under the supervision of Thomas V. Rumple, manager.

It soon became apparent that a lead person was needed to gather information, schedule the projects through the shop, order materials and do estimates.

- ◆ A lead position was created within the fifteen member trades team. This position would serve for no more than 150 days on a rotation basis.
- ◆ Bill Simpson, from the cabinet shop, was ap-



Architectural Trades
Observatory Side Table Matched Building Decor

Key Results

- ◆ Open communication and sharing of values resulted in increased level of trust.
- ◆ Complete involvement in the working processes of the unit resulted in greater efficiencies.
- ◆ Nothing is hidden. Clearer understanding and control of how the unit is run.
- ◆ Increased expertise of tradesmen offers greater service options.
- ◆ Reduce recharge rate to customers
- ◆ Well informed team
- ◆ Reduction in project completion time
- ◆ Increase customer satisfaction
- ◆ All staff is involved in the performance of the unit.

The Best Practices Project Team

Tom Rumble
Steve Correll
Steve Hackbarth
Patrick Thornsberry

FABRICATED BY



CARPENTER SHOP

New Goals

1. Tracking costs pertaining to each shop budget
2. More responsibility to the individual work teams (records of vendors and spending)
3. Managers presence on shops floor and project areas
4. Keeping record of each job achievement and total value to the campus
5. Continuous inspiration of positive growth of all staff
6. Purchasing of advance machinery

Data and Stats

Revenue...

July 1, 1998– June 30, 1999

Number Projects Completed: 390

Number of Clients Served: 390

M4100 Shop: \$680, 740

M4200 Shop: \$170, 460

M4500 Shop: \$363,339

Total Revenue: \$1,214,539

July 1, 1999– present

Current Millwork Projects:
175 on-going jobs

Revenue for July-August 1999:

M4100 Shop: \$102, 542

M4200 Shop: \$23,881

M4500 Shop: \$ 22,753



Angell Hall Computer Room

“The creation of the lead position increased performance and completion of projects, which resulted in savings and customer satisfaction.”

From the Publisher

Plant Academy documents and disseminates best work practices in Plant Operations

The Goals

- ◆ Share workplace solutions to problems from lessons learned
- ◆ Serve as a benchmark for assessing trends and conditions
- ◆ Identify who is doing what to implement commitment to business objectives

- ◆ Provide insight to policy options and capacity-building opportunities to improve service to customers

- ◆ Work through common issues

- ◆ Promote interdepartmental communication and collaboration

- ◆ Use as training tools

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