

Improving Observation Skills, Page 10

Video: Observation Skills: Shift Change

Duration: 4 minutes, 55 seconds

HOW DO MORNING MEETINGS WORK?

JOHN WITKOWSKI: Every day we start off, and we like to have people informed of what's expected of them for the day. We do a little debrief of, OK, what jobs have to run. If there were any problems the night before, the shift, there will be a little shift meeting where people will discuss, hey, keep an eye on Machine 38, or here's a couple watch outs so people have an idea of what's going on, or what may have had a maintenance breakdown the night before, any kind of number of things like that. But the important thing is that we inform the employees to know what's expected of them for that day's events that are going to take place.

HOW LONG DO THESE MORNING MEETINGS LAST?

Typically, morning meetings can last about 15 minutes when we're just having the two shifts change. Because we are on 24/7 rotations. We have four shifts, 12-hour shifts, so there's not a lot of overlap. But it's critical for about 15 minutes that they download with each other what's going on before. Problems beyond that-- we have the normal staff that comes in on the Monday to Friday that, if they need to, will call a separate team meeting. And again, we'll get subject matter experts as well as people on the floor together to get some base information as to what was taking place so we can thoroughly identify and know what the problem is.

HOW DOES YOUR COMPANY MANAGE SHIFT CHANGE?

Shift change management is usually done with the shift supervisor. So what we'll do is-- we are in a clean environment. So the team that's on will stay in the clean room, and the team that's coming on for that shift will gown up and they'll come in. The shift supervisor will lead them around either a metric board or an information board to let them know what was happening on the floor. And then they exchange information, and the other shift will head out for the day, and the other one will get out on the floor and start to get things going.

WHAT COMMON PROBLEMS DO YOU SEE DURING A SHIFT CHANGE?

Again, we may not always do it every shift change. But I think it's critical, because a lot of things can happen during the day. And you want to give someone a heads up. You let them know-- like I said, if there's a certain machine, there's an issue or a problem, what it does is heightens your awareness. And they'll pay a little bit more attention when they come into a certain situation. And it's very helpful.

WHAT COMMON PROBLEMS DO YOU SEE DURING A SHIFT CHANGE?

CRAIG BATES: It's hard to communicate everything that goes on throughout a shift. And we might have overlaps of different departments, or different levels of people might have a half an hour, they might have five minutes. Depending on if it's a technical person, then we might want to have a half-hour overlap to be able to really convey what was happening during the day. But I would say it's a thing where it's getting all the information to the next shift.

And as far as the shifts go, we typically do what I've always known as the IBM 12-hour shifts where you're working two days and then you're off the next three days. It always seems like at the end of those work segments, at the end of your three days, you start to check out. You start to see that people are checking out a couple hours early. And they're, well, the next guy can take care of this. And we do fight that on a technical aspect. And it's something that is a little difficult to get a handle on sometimes.

HOW DOES YOUR COMPANY MANAGE SHIFT CHANGE?

LEO GIBBONS: I think it starts at the beginning of the shift with our safety touch shift meeting where the supervisor is presenting a safety topic to the operators in an attempt to make them think about safety before they go out on the factory floor. Also, that supervisor is talking about the material going through the plant, anything unusual that happened in the shift previous. So trying to get the employee's mind on his work and focused on what he's going to be doing. And they're also talking about what's important for that shift, what needs to be made, what's the priority list, is there any equipment that has an issue with it from the previous shift.

WHAT SHOULD EMPLOYEES BE AWARE OF?

People not paying attention to what's being talked about. And that's something each individual has to address himself. It's important for everybody to keep in mind that this is a business, and we all have our roles to play.