

THE

FIRST SHOT



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER DEVOTED TO THE PEOPLE OF EMPIRE DIE CASTING

FALL 2004 NUMBER 24

Strategic Planning Proves Invaluable

By **Bob Hopkins**, V.P. of Administration

In May of 2003, Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. initiated a written strategic plan developed by the Strategic Planning Committee. Created to address key critical areas, the plan consisted of Phase I: Team Building and Phase II: Committing to the Process. Since its development, the strategic planning meetings have continued on a bi-weekly basis with much enthusiasm and commitment.

A few months ago, the committee compiled a questionnaire for upper management that posed questions about areas that needed improvement, action items and their results, challenges for the next five years, and goals. The responses from that questionnaire were collected and used to develop a more specific survey that was then directed to middle management. The joint opinion poll was followed by the development of new action plans for critical items that appeared on the questionnaires.

One of the most recent action plans implemented was based on a communication issue in which one team member suggested short, fifteen minute meetings, twice a day, with members from each department. The aim of these meetings was to bring necessary individuals up to speed on significant jobs, set-ups and/or breakdowns. They have since proved invaluable! The lines of communication have opened up and improved daily operations. The Strategic Planning Committee will continue developing strategies that improve overall operation efficiencies of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc.!

Ready...Fire...Aim!

By **Rick Rogel**, President/CEO

The truth is, our finest moments likely occur when we are, “against the wall”, “at wits end”, “up to our butt”, etc. At such time, we search for ways and answers other than the old ways which get the same results. Conflict is our valued friend.

Conflict is the result of one or more people frustrated with current results and willing to challenge accepted principles and practices presently at a standstill. Are the challenges welcome? Absolutely NOT! The willingness to create conflict leads to the interest of creating change. The group for change collaborate their ideas together to formulate viable solutions and problem solving no one person could conceive. Synergy is now present and desired outcomes flow. Change is a byproduct of conflict, relating to the expression of different ideas. Get in touch with the real intentions and motivations, act with integrity and the real solutions will surface through a group dedicated to positive goals.

Ready...Aim...Fire!!

Workshop's a Success at Empire

Twenty-four front line managers and supervisors attended a Fred Pryor taught, in-house seminar in September. The workshop, "The Extraordinary Leader: Going from Good to Great", consisted of lessons about gaining key insights, powerful combinations of strengths, and the differences between weaknesses and fatal flaws. The intention of the seminar was to convert the conventional idea that leaders are born, to that fact that anyone can be a great leader.

The results were incredible! Round table interaction of our staff provided valuable tools, gained from their experiences, and has since been adapted to better understand and manage our production staff.

For more information, please call:

Ms. Julie Meyer
Ph 800.255.6278
www.pryor.com

PERSONAL
RESPONSIBILITY
IN
DAILY
EFFORT

Productivity Profile Degator

A Degator's job begins after the die cast operator produces what is known as "raw" castings. These castings are passed to the Degator, who acts as the operator's "second eyes", and visually inspects the castings for possible defects.

The Degator then places the casting into a trim die where the excess metal is removed. Because every part is trimmed differently, they must refer to the Inspection Sign-Off Sheet which lists all of the operations and parameters that must be followed when producing a particular part. In some instances, where critical dimensions are involved, they must use special gages to check these dimensions for accuracy. Once the Degator is satisfied that the casting is trimmed properly, one of two things may happen. Either the castings are packed by him or her at the machine and sent to the shipping department for distribution to the customer, or the castings are placed in wire baskets and sent to the trim room where further operations may need to be performed before the castings are ready for shipment.

They are also responsible for tracking the number of acceptable and un-acceptable castings produced by recording this information on a computer-generated Travel Card. This Travel Card follows the castings through the plant so that accurate counts are kept. It also lists all necessary secondary operations that must be performed, and ensures none are missed.

A Degator's responsibilities are many and varied; they are craftsmen and a critical part of the die casting process.

Supplier Salute



Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. contracted Shane Wynn Photography to shoot over forty high resolution photographs for our new company brochure due to be released this fall. We were pleasantly surprised with their skillfulness and the quality of the final product. Shane captured the most important aspects of our business with a single click.

Shane Wynn is a professional freelance photographer with over ten years of experience. She provides fast and reliable service to local families and businesses. She also offers quality industrial, commercial, and portrait photography at a competitive price. For your 35mm, digital, or retouching needs please log onto www.shanewynn.com.

Shane Wynn Photography

940 Amelia Avenue • Akron, OH 44302 • Ph 330.701.3598

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Employee of the Year 2004

Walter Kijanski began his employment with Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. July 15, 1985. He has held many positions throughout his almost twenty years, including die repairman, diemaker class B, leadman, and is currently aluminum tool room foreman.

Walter resides in Independence with his wife, Beata, and two daughters, Alice, 16 and Sylvia, 11. Alice is currently in eleventh grade and Sylvia is in the sixth grade. Walter has much to be proud of!



He enjoys spending his free time listening to various types of music, traveling, gardening with his wife, and playing basketball and volleyball with his children. Walter's favorite place to travel is the ocean. He has visited the majority of the East coast, but particularly enjoys Myrtle Beach, SC. When not traveling, Walter can be found singing and playing the guitar in his band, "Polish Falcon". Many thanks to Walter for being a part of our team...keep up the good work!!

Krystyna Hoscilowicz has graciously served with Empire Die Casting Co., Inc.



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dedication, positive attitude, high level of performance, and constant loyalty have led the management team to award Krystyna the Employee of the Year 2004. Our sincerest congratulations and gratitude for her undying efforts.

Congratulations!



Great Weather for a Great Day!!

On Monday, September 6, the employees of Empire Die Casting Co., Inc. gathered for a company picnic at Wiegand's Lake Park in Chesterland, Ohio. The weather was picture perfect and the employees and their families enjoyed boating, volleyball, horseshoes, bingo, and softball. Also, there were many games for the children and prizes to many in attendance.

The park itself was a perfect location for the picnic. The grounds were well maintained, clean, and the food was very good. We thank Tammie Stevens for handling all of the arrangements and Rick Rogel for giving us the opportunity to have the picnic.

We look forward to next year's festivities!



On the Move



Mike Spicel, promoted to Manufacturing Manager, Zinc Products.

Jeff Atchley, promoted to Manufacturing Manager, Aluminum Products.

Dennis Eblen, promoted to Head Production Trainer.



Welcome Aboard Reps !



Glaser-Miller Co.

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Robert Rottiers: DE, MD, PA **Nathan Brubaker:** N.MD, PA
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Jenny Cannon: GA **Ike Wintin:** FL
Sally Woodworth: Inside Sales

TRADE SHOW TRAIL



Please visit us at:

Greater Chicago Job Shop Show
St. Charles, IL
10/26/04-10/28/04

2004 Motorsports Eng Exhibition
Dearborn, MI
11/30/04-12/02/04

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