

Profits increased 25% - but even better, the Culture Improved

By Mike Touzeau

He's a no-nonsense guy and one of those most representative of the soul of American manufacturing.

Robert Peuterbaugh, president of Joint Production Technology (JPT) in Macomb, Michigan, has always believed in his people, his process, and his company's capability of weathering the worst.

Like many in his field, he paid his dues early and built his business through long hours and hands-on know how.

From his first dabbles at a design table at age 14 to the day he took over JPT in 1986, Peuterbaugh honed his skills on every machine and in every department—from sales to shipping, machining to marketing—while taking evening classes in business, technology, and accounting.

Providing high tech innovations for precision cutting, boring, and other applicable manufacturing functions for such big outfits as GM, Ford, TRW, and many others here and abroad, Peuterbaugh knows his operation inside out. Battling the downturn like everyone else, this seasoned leader has always investigated long-term remedies rather than groping for gimmicks, so he began to search for solutions.

IF WE COULD BECOME MORE PRODUCTIVE ...

"As things got worse, I looked at what would make things better," he said.

"I had followed Dr. Lisa's emails for two years before signing up."

He knew it would be important to improve productivity, so having read much of what Dr. Lisa had written on Velocity Scheduling System (VSS), he took the plunge, knowing many others wouldn't.

"Sometimes you say that we're good at what we do, so why change?"

"When I saw all the reasons," he put it, "it all fit. That's what got me to talk to her."

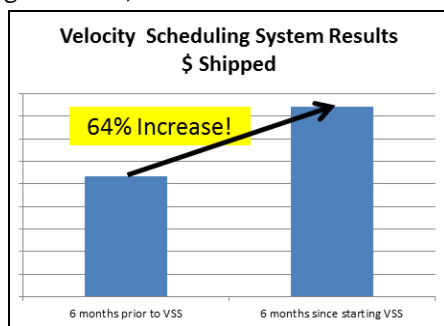
JPT HAS SHOWN A 64 % INCREASE IN SHIPPED \$.

He estimates between a 25 and 35 percent profit increase "directly attributable," he says, to the changes his team instituted after starting the VSS program in February.

Once the process started working, he recalls, his team stood in awe at the seamless flow, shipping each day with customers getting something every day.

"They just could not believe it."

A member of many manufacturing organizations, he works with local schools to



promote manufacturing career education, and serves on the Board of Directors for Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association (TMTA). Especially impressed with the "coaching" feature in the VSS program, he conversely compared other typical consulting options to "sitting in class."

"COACHING MORPHS. IT'S EVOLUTIONARY."

He didn't really catch on, he admits, till the 5th online meeting.

"That's when we got the metrics," he explained.

"She weaved it all together," he said of Dr. Lisa's instruction, which he found has entirely changed the culture in his shop. He is now looking to hire.

A VISUAL SYSTEM AND A BETTER CULTURE

"It encourages people to work together," he says, "and to learn other jobs. When one person's not there, another can pick it up, and when it's visual, it's so much better."

"Men are visual, and they don't like taking directions from others. With this, you put it on the board and you see what's next to be done."

"I call it a bucket brigade. It makes work fun."

That's coming from the boss, but Peuterbaugh knows how a culture change like that down on the floor can ensure loyalty and long-term success.

"It changes attitudes. It helps me take the shyest people and make them feel more important. They know how they fit. There used to be walls between engineering and manufacturing. This brings out all personalities and gives them a way to work together."

SYSTEMS & PROCESSES ENSURE LASTING SUCCESS.

Trust, communication, interaction, and a belief in each other, whether locally or globally, means you stand the test of time.

"After the tenth year, then what happens?" he asks.

"If you don't have a process in place, how can you sell your business or even retire?"

Peuterbaugh, 56, wants to see modern perspectives in manufacturing, like VSS, passed on to the next generation.

"The business of manufacturing is still intact," he insists.

"The shop is not a dirty, dingy place anymore. We have computers everywhere. We can get that across to the next generation, to see the things we do well, the satisfaction when we get it done, plus you can be as creative as you want."

SOLUTIONS, NOT TOOLS, WILL HELP MANUFACTURING THRIVE.

Robert Peuterbaugh's story is probably not unlike your own. You worked hard to build a solid reputation with your customers. You want American manufacturing to be great, and though you're a successful small or large operation, scheduling is still always an issue.

VSS is a system that creates a continuous flow in your operation so all your employees share in knowing what needs to be done and when.

"I sell a solution, not a tool," Peuterbaugh stated, "and VSS is a solution, not a tool."

"It's like breathing. You don't even have to think about it. After a while you do it and it works. It just flows."



JPT Velocity Team

LIMITED TIME: Watch a 47 minute webinar on "How to Get More Jobs Done Faster" to learn specifically what Robert did to improve his shop:
<http://www.VelocitySchedulingSystem.com>.