Think Your Way To Success

Your thoughts drive your life. You become what you think about, no exceptions. And the good news is that we all have the ability to control our thoughts.

I once talked to a guy I knew who was riding a stationary exercise bike. He obviously had a cold and was struggling to keep going. I said, “Hey looks like you’re a little under the weather. How long have you had that cold?” He responded, “In three weeks it will be a month.” What kind of thinking is that?

I hear it daily. On Monday you have a sniffle. You think you’ll have a cold by Tuesday and then a fever by Wednesday and you’re already planning to stay home from work on Thursday. And it’s only Monday!

As yee think so shall yee be. Of course there are no guarantees in life, but if one set of thoughts could potentially make you better and another set pulls you down, why wouldn’t you choose to think the thoughts that give you a chance of moving forward?

The answer is that we all become habituated in our thinking. Over time our thinking becomes as automatic as driving a car. Thinking happens without thinking.

So when you come to work each day, if you really want to move onward and upward, it’s not enough to just bring your body. If you are to move forward, you have to bring your brain as well. Turn your thoughts away from what’s wrong and why things never work out. Put your mental energy into how to work with your team to make things better. Possibility thinking is the only path to progress.

Gentlemen, Stop Your Engines

During a recent safety audit we were put on notice that we were in violation for vehicles left running unattended. Additionally the cost of the fuel that is burned unnecessarily over a year’s time is staggering and could be put to more productive purposes. So please promote safety, avoid fines and help cut expenses by stopping your engines when parked.
Direct Deposit……

As I sit back trying to decide what to write about this month, my concentration is derailed by an ever growing stack of paychecks sitting patiently on my desk to be retrieved by their proper owner. The issue however is that it appears the proper owners are not anxious to claim them. You may wonder why anyone would not want to get their paychecks and the answer in this case is really quite simple, their owners have all signed up for direct deposit. Although I am a huge advocate of direct deposit and am constantly encouraging everyone to sign up for it, I am not a proponent of ignoring the fact that each week we receive a paycheck receipt. If you are out on a Friday, it is still your responsibility to stop by the HR department and retrieve your paycheck stub, they will not be mailed home, but will instead patiently wait for you to come and claim them.

Be Well, Be Happy…Karen!
Onward & Upward

Zamboni to the Rescue

Over the years we have made multiple “failed attempts” to keep our dust down:

1. Rotating brush on skid steer
2. Pelican Elgin street sweeper
3. Mack water truck
4. Most recently the Freightliner vacuum truck

Three strikes and you’re out, but what’s the rule when you miss four swings up at bat? If you’ve been around here for more than five minutes you know the answer is never give up and go home. Quitting is just not in our vocabulary. This time we got it right; “Zamboni” to the rescue. It’s the little orange golf cart Lewis rides around on. It does the job. End of Story.

New Company Swimming Pool

Spring is in the air so they must be building a company swimming pool? As with previous dust control efforts we’ve made many different attempts over the years to control mud around the shop and MSW building, all of which have failed miserably. Sorry to disappoint, but before you jump in, we’re not installing a swimming pool by the shop. We’ve recycled a couple of concrete septic tanks delivered here that were destined to be crushed into gravel. We’re regrading and compacting the surface to direct rain water into the tanks and then pump it into the storm water pond. Say goodbye to mud madness. It won’t be missed. A more civilized environment rain or shine is in our crosshairs.
Sweating The Details

It is fantastic when people throw excuses on the ground, stomp on them, grind them into the dirt, charge forward and get the job done anyway. Tasked with maintaining our fleet of vehicles, all of our equipment, trailers, containers, compactors and “extra” projects, the shop would be justified in making excuses. But they don’t.

With all that is on their plate they are working together, coming up with fresh ideas to move us forward and putting those ideas into action. We are not even through the month of March and the shop is clearly leading the way in positive change. Building on momentum started last year when they launched aggressively into redesigning the shop’s safety program. Working with Michael Peoples, training was designed to address safety issues specific to their work environment. Shop safety teams have been developed to work on a rotating basis to help identify and resolve safety issues in the shop. They report on a weekly basis at safety meetings, working directly with their peers to solve safety issues in their work areas. The initiative to take responsibility for their own safety and welfare is impressive.

Last year the shop established a purchase order and work order system to assist in the ordering of parts, controlling inventory, credits and the assignment of work. Building a program that works is not an easy task and took the greater part of 2015 to really get this program running smoothly. Building on this success, additional steps were taken to improve the process of orders and the ordering of parts and supplies by creating an additional work station as well as additional personnel during the second shift to help handle the workload. This program has grown and now includes equipment in the C&D building, welding and safety work orders. This is a massive step forward as it streamlines and prioritizes repairs that are specific to welding or pose a safety issue. These programs are now being incorporated throughout our entire campus to streamline the identification and improve the response time for repairs.

Recently tasked with the job of completing the fuel canopy, the shop did not waste a moment to bring the project back to life. Everyone can clearly see that after two long years of waiting the fuel island is actually going to happen. Once again, no excuses, just moving us onward and upward!

The members of this team (in alphabetical order) are: Jimmy Chambers, Dan Gooden, Jonathan Hines, David Jackson (Skeeter), Delva Johnson, Robert Johnson, Jennifer Macaluso, Stephen Morris, Juan Osorio, Eugene Palmer, Justin Platt, Elmoe Shelton, Rodney Shifflette and Juanita Young
Back To School

Talk about moving onward and upward, the operator training lead by Michael Peoples and Mike Blewitt is on the fast track. 100% of the skid steer training is done, 95% of the loader training is complete, the excavator curriculum is complete and classes will begin on April 2nd. The long term impact of this training cannot be understated. This will improve not only the daily operation of our equipment but also preventive maintenance. In step with the training later this month operators will be required to keep a log book documenting their daily maintenance checks as well as any issues they are experiencing with their equipment. Don’t worry yard truck drivers, you have not been forgotten. Your training will start on April 9th and you will also be gifted with log books to track your maintenance and trailer changes.

Employee Focus

You know you have passion about something when you start doing it as a kid and still love doing it as an adult. With the help of his uncle, Jonathan Hines began working on engines at the age of 10. He built his first engine at 11 ½. He is one of the lucky few who gets paid to do what they really think of as play. His favorite thing about working here is the environment. He says, “Dan is great to work for. I get to work with a great team and we have fun while we work. It is important that we enjoy what we do because we spend more time here than we do with our families.” Jonathan’s hard work is paying off as he was recently promoted to the nightshift foreman. In his spare time he loves to invent things with items that were not meant to go together. Thank you Jonathan for the contribution you make to our success.