



“Sharing Information to Improve Reliability”



## Wildly Successful Initiatives

*by June Ledet*

In our lead article we normally talk about our philosophy, some new way of thinking about the old problems that many companies have in common or an article that we think is worth sharing with you. In this issue we are going to present a synopsis of *Spiral Up*, a book that has recently been published. It points out the things that “wildly successful initiatives” have in common. This book contains interesting examples of several organizations that have benefited from this unique approach to management. The 46 companies studied have a range of interests and the industries vary. One is involved with innovative product development and production. Another is a government revenue agency. A refinery, a company that does underwater mining, the EPA, a debate team and a law enforcement agency are among the many companies mentioned. Jane Linder is the author of *Spiral Up (...and Other Management Secrets Behind Wildly Successful Initiatives)*.

The author talks about this book as beginning upside down. Her first thought was to explore why many business projects normally well-conceived and run by well-intentioned, intelligent people only attain mediocre results compared to the lofty reasons for launching them in the first place. After

running the idea for this book past colleagues, family and friends and noticing their complete lack of enthusiasm for a book about failure, she turned the idea around and decided to instead explore the anatomy of companies who had achieved implementing wildly successful initiatives. She relates that a good friend who she trusts for perceptive feedback said, “You’re right about all the failure, of course. I just don’t want to read about it. I live with it every day.”

Dr. Linder came to the conclusion that wildly successful initiatives, though varied in type, mission, and approach do have five management dynamics in common. They are:

1. Reach Beyond Your Grasp—make a difference
2. Make Space—step off the edge
3. Get It Right—learn by trying
4. Energize People—create a strong emotional field
5. Spiral Up—get things done

The book spends considerable time fleshing out these five principles and giving specific examples of how the various organizations did specific things to make their initiatives successful.

One of the wildly successful initiatives was an innovative product, that you might be familiar with Ambient Devices’ Orb – a device that sits on your desk and gives up to the minute stock market status by glowing various colors. David Rose,

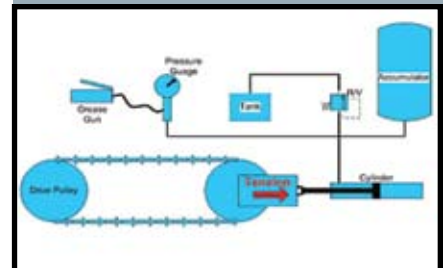
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## New Tensioner Pulls Bug 88 Out of Chains!

SembCorp Utilities UK continues to run The Manufacturing Game® workshops at Wilton Power Station in the UK, facilitated and supported by Reliable Manufacturing Ltd. A recently completed Action Team, led by mechanical maintenance technician Dave Scope, is delivering improved reliability to the Coal Mill Feeders.

Dave had noticed that the boiler hours lost due to poor coal feeder reliability were over five times greater in 2006 than they had been in 2005 so he enlisted help from Stephen Harrison, Glynn Jones and Eric Middleton.



One of the major contributors to the loss was failure of the device, which tensions the feeder chain, and in turn this was causing coal blockages.

The old system relied on a hydraulic system to tension the chain and several problems with the hydraulic system contributed to the frequent chain derailments.

The tension force was often too low, and this meant that the cylinder could lose chain tension if there was a blockage and would then struggle to take up

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## SCHEDULE

Throughout the year, **The Manufacturing Game®** holds workshops for the general public at universities and/or professional organizations.

For more information visit  
[www.mfg-game.com](http://www.mfg-game.com)

### Public Workshops

Reliability Center Inc. will be holding a Public Workshop at the RCI Conference Center in Hopewell, VA

January 20–22, 2007.

For more information call  
(804) 458-0645 or visit  
[Info@Reliability.com](mailto:Info@Reliability.com)

The Manufacturing Game® will be holding a Public Workshop at the EAM/RCM Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada  
March 17, 2008.

For more information visit  
[www.MaintenanceConference.com](http://www.MaintenanceConference.com)

### Conferences of Interest



#### **MARS Symposium** **Houston Chapter of SMRP**

Brady's Landing in Houston, TX

February 28, 2008.

Inquire: [EdFoster@mundycos.com](mailto:EdFoster@mundycos.com)



#### **Reliability Centered Maintenance Managers' Forum & Enterprise Asset Management Summit**

Las Vegas, Nevada

March 17–20, 2008

For more information or to register visit [www.MaintenanceConference.com](http://www.MaintenanceConference.com) or call (888) 575-1245

**Mark Your Calendar!**



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the CEO of Ambient Devices, met with skepticism and closed doors when he tried approaching telecommunications companies in the hope of forming a relationship with them to transmit the data he needed for the Orb. He ended up forming a partnership instead with a pager company eager to strike out in new directions with the technology they already had. He met the same type of refusal after the products were developed and he attempted to bring them to the market place. Both Sharper Image and Brookstone flatly turned him down. It was only after he worked out a deal with Hammacher Schlemmer to feature the Orb in its company catalog that the Brookstone buyer called David Rose and indicated his interest. We would have to go into great detail to show how all five dynamics played out at Ambient Devices, but you can easily see that Mr. Rose is bringing products to the market place that do “make a difference”. By pursuing the various partnerships both in development and on the retail level he was “stepping off the edge”.

We are extremely proud of one of the companies featured in the book: the Lima Refinery. We at The Manufacturing Game® worked with the refinery in the mid 90's and helped them make the changes that not only kept them in business even after BP made a decision to either sell the refinery or to shut them down, but also encouraged them to continue to improve while their future was uncertain. That improvement has continued over time and the change has been sustained for 13 years. Just this past year the refinery was sold to Husky Energy at a price that was, according to the Wall Street Journal, 51 percent higher than the last refinery sold in the United States. Much of the success at the refinery can be attributed to a host of heroes who created all five wildly successful dynamics by managing in a very unusual way. Jim Schaefer, the

commercial manager for the two BP Ohio refineries, took a leap of faith by implementing several innovative ideas to keep the Lima refinery in the BP family. He involved the workforce in his plans to take up the challenges facing them and gave employees room to make smart improvements that only they could see. Another of the heroes mentioned is Paul Monus who found Winston Ledet and The Manufacturing Game® as part of his search for a practical, effective tool for applying System Dynamics to drive operational effectiveness. By embracing defect elimination to drive down costs and drop much larger profits to the bottom line, Monus was able to get BP to shift its thinking from reactive maintenance to proactive manufacturing. Not only were there many other heroes who took on roles over time at the refinery to save their organization and their jobs, but even the Mayor of Lima, David Berger, became involved in the effort to keep the refinery viable so that Lima would continue to prosper.

When the fate of the refinery looked bleak, Mayor Berger and Jim Schaeffer began a secret effort to find a buyer for the Lima refinery. They were successful when just three months before the scheduled close of the refinery, Clark Oil, owned largely by the Blackstone Group, made the call to London to purchase the refinery for an amount that BP could not turn down. Schaeffer and Berger had been meeting behind closed doors with David Stockman, former budget director for the Reagan administration and principal in the Blackstone Group, for several months getting him interested in the refinery.

AIRNow is something that most of you recognize from your local weather reports, but you may be unaware of how it came to be. Phil Dickerson and

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Chet Wayland originally created AIRNow in 1998 while working at the EPA. They started with the idea of providing up to the minute air quality data throughout the United States. Today, the initiative provides current information on ozone levels so that you will know whether it is a good day for outdoor activities. It is particularly important for people with allergies, illnesses, small children, the aged, etc. The participants worked through a strictly voluntary grassroots program. According to *Spiral Up*, they were able to do this by “building its international scope one air quality region at a time”. They were able to take advantage, early on in the project, of the interest in the Internet and software that was developed to make it easier for local and regional air quality engineers to gather the necessary information and send it on in a timely manner to the EPA. Then they developed regional maps showing the current ozone levels.

This program is now drawing international interest from countries like South Korea, Mexico and the Netherlands. In addition, the program is being expanded to

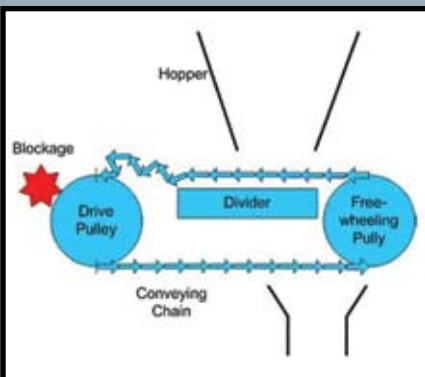
include Particulate Matter pollution, a second airborne health hazard. Ozone tends to be a problem only in the hot summer months but Particulate Matter is a problem throughout the year. USA Today has incorporated air quality information about 36 US cities into its paper on a daily basis. We all know the complexity of getting something done within companies we work with. Can you imagine how these people managed to succeed while dealing with 50 state governments, the US Federal government, private radio and television stations and a major US newspaper—all with no mandates and only voluntary participation? They reached beyond their grasp to make a difference, got it right by experimenting with the process, energized people in a way that made the initiative nearly unstoppable. And over the past ten years, AirNOW has improved, expanded and grown in a way that would have been hard to predict at the beginning. It has truly spiraled up.

There are many more interesting examples in the book of other companies, organizations and entities that had wildly successful initiatives. A meaningful

passage in the book states, “Wildly successful initiatives take a different route. They do not aim for transformation. Frequently they achieve it, but that is not their reason for being. Instead, they set out to make a particular kind of contribution. They succeed over the long haul not by trying to vault to Paradise, but by spiraling up one valuable step at a time.” We found this book to be interesting and energizing in pointing the way that others have achieved success and inspiring us to do the same. We wish you success in your initiatives and hope that you will achieve the kind of recognition that the companies mentioned in *Spiral Up* have been able to attain and maintain for many years.

*Jane C. Linder is President of the Progress Board, LLC, a consulting company that specializes in helping clients put good ideas to work. Dr. Linder has been a professor at Harvard Business School, and spent more than a decade as an executive in the technology industry. Her articles have appeared in Harvard Business Review, MIT's Sloan Management Review and Across the Board, among others. She is the author of Outsourcing for Radical Change. Spiral Up is available through the publisher AMACOM and Amazon.com along with other sources.*

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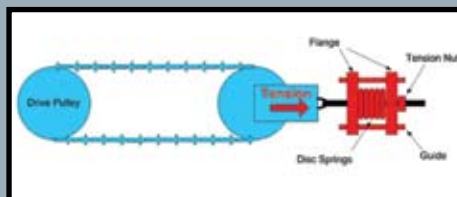
any chain stretch.

The team set about developing a new design, and after a couple of prototypes settled on a spring and threaded bar arrangement, which provides a progressive and unrestricted tension force.

The new system retained

all the functions of the previous arrangement and was designed as a straight swap with the old hydraulic cylinder, so installation was quick and inexpensive.

The new installation has been completely successful and has been applied to all six feeders. It is expected that the overall downtime on these units will be reduced by a massive 75%.



Congratulations to Technician Dave Scope and his team for a job well done!





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There can be change  
without progress but not  
progress without change  
—Anonymous



## TMG News

### Winston Ledet to Speak at 2008 EAM/RCM Conference The ABC's of Failure – Getting Rid of the “Noise” in Your System

Winston P. Ledet, of Ledet Enterprises, Inc. co-developer and owner of The Manufacturing Game®, Operations Excellence Game™, and The OilPro Game™ workshops will be the keynote speaker at the RCM/EAM Conference held March 17–20, 2008 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Winston's speech “The ABC's of Failure – Getting Rid of the Noise in Your System” is a surprisingly different way of looking at the causes of failures in manufacturing, where to find them and how to eliminate the defects that cause these failures resulting in the elimination of 40% of the work.

As part of the process of gathering, analyzing and condensing data from manufacturing sites around the world over the last 20 years it became apparent to him that it could all be simplified into ABC. Aging of

equipment, Basic wear and tear and Careless work habits account for all the production losses and equipment down time experienced by industry. There are very simple ways to address the ABC's. Unfortunately the Planned Domain, pursued by most industries in the western world will not get organizations to the goal they are trying to achieve since it is an unstable state of existence. Achieving a high degree of planned and scheduled work is a consequence of working correctly not the goal for which we should aim. In order to achieve “Best in Class” performance a site needs to be able to get rid of 40% of the existing work. The work that must be eliminated is the unplanned and unscheduled work that continually keeps you in the Reactive Domain. You must eliminate the “noise” in your system if you expect to make a real difference.

**A FREE Manufacturing Game®  
Public Workshop  
with conference registration  
at the EAM/RCM Conference  
in Las Vegas  
March 17, 2008  
Seating is limited so sign up  
early!**

For more information or to register visit:  
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