

ONE-PAGE INFORMATION - KAIZEN No.28

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■ Enomoto Kogyo-a Case Study of One Piece Flow Production

Many people still believe that “the one piece flow line” is economically adaptable only for mass-production. That is completely wrong. Enomoto Kogyo, a small manufacturer of aviation and space components and industrial conveyors in Gifu Prefecture is implementing “one piece flow production system” through-out its manufacturing processes to produce machine tool-related conveyors called “Chip Catch”. Each chip-catch is made to order with different configurations and dimensions. Through out the manufacturing process, there is no WIP at all. Only the necessary panel is stamped one by one to dimension, spot-welded, reveted and painted in one piece flow fashion and then sent to the final assembly station leaving no single unused component parts between processes. Mr. Enomoto, a young president and CEO, told 22 JST participants from Tomkins when they visited there in late September 2003 that without JIT system today’s production is impossible. Enomoto is using the laptop computers for daily production instruction and Andon so that production status is clearly indicated by “minutes”.

All this production control system is designed and installed “in-house” by Enomoto engineers and workers. This is a good example of many LCA’s you will find at Enomoto Kogyo.

■ Women are More Kaizen-Minded ?

As a part of my workshop project of Five S designed for some 20 Japanese factories in the Philippines conducted last week in Manila under AOTS (Association of Overseas Technical Scholarship) sponsorship, Atlantic Coatings Inc, was chosen as the bench-marking factory in Five S. This company is found to be one of the best Five S companies I ever visited. The plant is “spit and polish” with no rubbish at all. Standard procedures are posted everywhere and Quality Circles are very active to eliminate Muda from manufacturing processes. Color coordination policy is extensively implemented as good Gemba Management tools. The plant is run by three female top managers using very progressive participating management philosophies. Plant cleaning, machine maintenance and gardening chores are performed by rotating employees themselves, not by outside people to save expense. “Family Council” is established by employees to operate canteens and dormitory and to design /implement annual events such as X’mas parties. Mr. Johnson Ongking, VP for production, said to visiting workshop participants that he is 100% comfortable to let the female top management team run his factory.

From my long years of experience in Kaizen in many countries I feel strong that women are more adaptable to Kaizen than men because Kaizen requires everlasting efforts, patience and attention to detail. Men are more likely to do “One time fix”.