



Chuck Smith

FOCUS: On Manufacturing Effectiveness



The bottom line measures of how well we perform the manufacturing function are quality, service and cost. These three factors determine customer perception of value delivered.

We've all heard a lot about quality in the last few years. The transition of "made in Japan" from a symbol of cheap and shoddy goods of little value to a mark of excellence is an amazing success story. It is also a tribute to the vision, strategies and energetic application of quality management methods by resourceful and determined people.

We know that to be successful in our business long term, we must be a quality leader. Our standard process and statistical process control programs have high priority. Equally important will be our commitment to the belief that continuous quality improvement is both possible and necessary to continue to be a winner in this business.

I see a lot of encouraging signs on the quality front. Ferrell Driskell, who answers customer complaints, said recently that our record-low complaint level in June made him feel like the Maytag repairman! In a recent meeting with a group of our x-ray film sales people, they had no complaints about customers getting out-of-specification product. (They are, however, very anxious to get the improved functionality we expect from new products now being developed.) It was also very satisfying to hear a group of Japanese customers talk about our "superior Cronar® film base" during their recent visit to our plant. These are all encouraging signs of progress but we have a long way

to go to achieve the only secure quality position . . . that is to be the best supplier in the business.

Customer Service has been a strength of our marketing program for many years. Helping customers solve their problems has given us a valued reputation for being responsive to their needs. A raw material problem early this year caused late deliveries from the plant to the distribution centers, and a lot of extra effort was needed to keep customers supplied. We have recovered from that problem and have a new goal of 100% on-time delivery from distribution centers to customers and are positioning our plant and inventories to meet that goal.

Cost is obviously a very important third factor in the value equation which we need to address vigorously. While the weak dollar has eased price pressure from foreign competitors temporarily, we need to make significant yield and productivity gains to match the cost structure of some of our competitors. Projects now nearing completion will help reduce cost as will our internal quality improvement programs. We need to continue to develop efficient self-reliant work teams with staffing and resources appropriate for the task. Will this mean more individual and team responsibility? It definitely will! There are many opportunities to contribute and it is encouraging to see the high level of interest in improving our performance shown by people here at Brevard. It's the key ingredient because our best thinking and performance is what will enable us to achieve our goal of being the best in this business.

Brevard Plant is 30 Years Old



This sketch of the "original" Brevard Plant actually shows several additions to the original structure. Artist Heather Saunders (Paul's daughter) drew this from a small photograph, for the Open House in 1977.

1987 marks Du Pont's 30th year at Brevard. In those years, the plant has grown from a small, relatively simple plant of about 200 employees to the complicated high-tech facility of today. That's 30 years of growth and progress — or constant change and confusion, depending on your point of view. At Brevard, we've seldom done

"business as usual." Sometimes slowly, more often with dizzying speed, our business has always been changing — new facilities, new products, trying to give (or get) the training to handle an always-new job. And as our plant has grown, so has our business — and the intensity of our competition.

In 30 years, many of the original Brevard employees have retired. Some are dead. Most have grandchildren. And the procedures are still changing, new products are still coming out. A few competitors have fallen away, but new ones have taken their places and they're gunning for us.

What now? Competition, change

and challenge seem to be the only "business as usual" that we can count on — but "that's bread and butter," says Jerry Stamey, payroll number 005.

Jerry has this to say of his three decades: "The good old days weren't really that great when you were going through them. But I've made a darned good living, I've never been bored — and there's always a new challenge."



HE'S SEEN IT ALL: Jerry Stamey, Payroll #005 is the first person hired on Wage Roll at the Brevard Plant, 30 years ago.