

## EDITORIAL

by Keith Harbin

## Making Sense

I find myself looking at situations in a way which completes an understanding of them. An example of this would be in answering the question, "Why pay taxes?" There is no end to the vicious circle of good, sound answers. Eventually, coming around to reality, it is good for me to pay them. Psychologists call my rationalization "Gestalt Closure." Everything must fit, the puzzle must be complete, the answers must be total; the facts are paramount and have to be handled without bias or prejudice. There is great pride taken in being a member of this "Closure Club."

"Closure people" don't fit into some schemes of order. Lawyers don't want us sitting on a jury. They want jurors who are emotional and easily swayed by the appearance of innocence or guilt of association. Personally, the burden is unanswered questions. Being without facts, goals and measuring devices is frightening.

Being of a "Closure mind set" there are things which do not make sense. Auto insurance is an example. While cars get older and worth less money, insurance companies continually go up on premiums. With our intelligence community and sophisticated technology, supposedly among the best in the world, why do incidents like the Iranian Air Bus Disaster happen? Why do some people think it is rude to ask clarifying questions? There is security in knowing details.

Thinking about it, there must be many DuPonters, people just like me, who don't fully understand what is happening with the interactive processes of OE. You know, why we have all the meetings and go through all the models, when everyone can see we've got work to do. The "PURPOSE" of what we are doing, the goal we are after and even the direction we are going sometimes appear elusive. What's

going on? Inquiring minds want to know! My sense of "Closure" is standing my dander on end! My need to understand is genuine.

From bits and pieces, reflection, some study and some deliberate concentration, finally there is an understandable track. For those who are having the same problem, this "Closure" is offered:

Change, the one sure thing, will happen; because all we are presently doing will not be good enough to assure our desired market share in the future. True, no one knows the future. Also true, no one knows exactly what our changes will be. Additionally true, we are collectively smarter than individually.

In our meetings we are learning systematic frameworks which "ENABLE" us to utilize the total thinking of our teams. These meetings will start and keep us on our trip toward the goal of Change and Improvement. After all, it's the trip, the learning, the changes, not the goal that's important. The goal is always being changed. That's the way it should be. The trip, our advancing toward a moving goal, our constant effort to improve, will always be the important element.

Interactive meetings and our OE training classes are providing us the road signs, the planning opportunities, the map, the strategies, the techniques of progress. There really is no ultimate goal, master plan or hidden agenda in our meetings. Change, progress and improvement will come from me and you. It will be developed in our team meetings as a result of our direct input. No one knows our individual jobs as well as we do. No one can suggest pertinent improvement as meaningful as those who actually do the jobs.

So far, this "Closure" works for me. But, I'm still going to ask questions.



## about "Being Fully Competitive"

*The idea is for us to become fully competitive in every aspect of everything we do. The result would be our customers having quality products at a competitive price. The question asked was, "What do you think about this concept of our being fully competitive?"*

*Here are some typical answers:*

**NOT A CHOICE**

"It's not a choice. We have to be competitive in every aspect of our jobs. It's a competitive world. Just look around you."

**RUN MAJOR VOLUME PRODUCTS**

"If we could exclusively run our major volume products, instead of short runs of everything imaginable, we could be extremely competitive."

**MAKING SOME PROGRESS**

"We are making some progress. The seriousness of what we are doing and the realization of our situation has our concern level very high. However, anxiety and frustration is increasing as well."

**RUN THE DAYTONA 500**

"Let me put it to you like this. You've been assigned to run the Daytona 500, against Cale Yarborough. You will drive your old Landcruiser and will only have a skeleton pit crew. How well are you going to do?"

**IMPORTANCE OF "BUY-IN"**

"I'm not sure everyone understands the importance of 'buy-in.' Folks perform in accordance with how they perceive the objective. For the most part we've not reached the 'buy-in or else' point."

**SOME THINGS ARE HELPING**

"We talk a lot about it and some things, like the work being done by the QITs, are helping. We need more people looking at more of our problems."

**VERY SERIOUS CHANGES**

"I think we have to make some very serious changes in how we all think about and do our jobs. Many are too concerned about maintaining the status quo and are losing sight of the real goal of changing for improvement."

**READY FOR THE EQUIPMENT**

"We are ready now for the equipment improvements that go hand in hand with being 'World Class.'"

**CONCERNED ABOUT REDUCTIONS**

"Look, everybody wants us to be successful. I'm personally concerned about future reductions in personnel. It's hard to cover for vacations now. Overtime is hard to get."

**OPERATE SMARTER**

"Whatever it is we are after, I wish we could figure a way to do it smarter. I'm trying to cover more jobs than I can adequately handle. I'd like to spend additional time assuring my output is correct. Emotionally this is becoming very stressful to me. I could do better by slowing down the pace. I wish I had time to figure out a way."

**(Editor's note:** Almost all our answers about being fully competitive fell into the category of us having a distance to go. Often the question prompted a reactive first response such as, "I don't see how we can ever be fully competitive as long as . . ." Eventually most replies became constructive and showed serious concern for our being successful in this endeavor.)

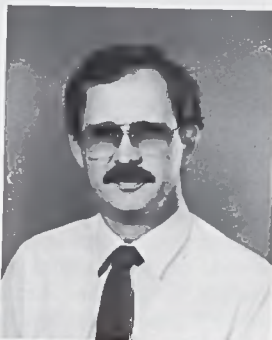
## About Your Benefits . . .

The Employee Services Team has been holding regular development meetings learning how to be a "self-managing team." We've developed a core purpose centered around our services to you — our customers.

In one of our recent meetings a comment was made I would like to share with you. The comment centered around our having to be very conscious of the things our customers are not asking and go the extra mile in helping them know their needs.

Administration of benefits is a very important part of our jobs. Benefit changes, requested through us, impact not only the employees, but their families as well. We've had people tell us they have confidence in us and know that we are taking care of everything. This is frightening since we cannot possibly know all individual situations, or what a person has on his mind. We've had deaths where a spouse had failed to change his record and therefore the survivor did not receive all the benefits. We've had employees find out they're terminally ill and want to increase their life insurance. Of course, at that time, it's too late.

We have to consistently remind folks about possible changes which need to be made and to make them aware of the



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benefits available. We can only make changes which are requested of us. However, with a little extra effort, we can help assure our customers and their families a more secure future. In order to do this we have to know our customers' wishes.

I think this extra effort is an example of the concern the members of this team have for you. Working together we can assure you have the benefits you need. Stop by and let's talk about it. There could come a time when it's too late to make changes. For peace of mind, let's do it soon. It's better to know your benefits are in line than to need what you don't have.

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS**

Signup for 1989 will be in October. We'll keep you posted on the procedure. Talk with some of the ninety plus people who used FSAs this year. These accounts really work.