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# Lubrication And Reliability Management

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*A New Concept In Significant Reliability Improvements  
...Through Outsourced Lubrication Stewardship.*

## The Dirty Dozen Deterrents to Reliability Improvements

### 1. Management Apathy.

It is not uncommon for upper-level management in most companies, particularly large ones, to take an indifferent attitude toward reliability improvements. Because administrators are often not technically oriented, most have difficulty realizing the potentially enormous benefits that can be gained from a reliability improvement program.

### 2. Lack of Financial Commitment.

It is no secret that many considerations, including resources, individuals, money, economic incentives, and so forth, are critical to the success of a reliability improvement program. The “resources” are often just not available within small companies that may be experiencing a financial downturn.

### 3. Production Concerns.

The classic song of the production supervisor and/or plant operator is, “I’m meeting deadlines and making money, so don’t rock the boat.” Sending a member of the reliability improvement team out to a plant is somewhat akin (at times) to letting a bull loose in a china closet.

### 4. Research, Development, and Design Concerns.

The somewhat simplistic mentality described in item 3 can be extended to apply to new projects at the research, development, or design stages. A very common misconception is that any reliability improvement activity is going to delay a (new) project and cost money.

### 5. Failure to Monitor Program Success.

Reliability improvement programs are often instituted with high hopes of success, but later abandoned because of a failure to monitor the program properly. Responsible individuals must continuously monitor and record the success and failures of the program.

### 6. Middle Management Decisions.

In most companies, it is usually middle management that is directly responsible to the top company administrator(s) for earnings. Unfortunately, it is often this group that views this type of program as an added expense that will eat into profits.

### 7. Information Exchange Within Organization.

As indicated in item 1 above, management often has a poor understanding of the advantage reliability improvement. In addition, the economic, environmental, liability social, and other advantages that various organizations within a company ascribe to a program of this nature will differ widely.

### 8. Confusion Regarding Technology.

It may be hard to believe, but many companies, particularly small ones, are not aware of breakthrough reliability technologies (such as oil mist). The successes are many and widely publicized. A reliability audit is doomed to failure if the individual(s) or group is not cognizant of the new technologies and their benefits.

### 9. Confusion About Economic Advantages.

Most companies are simply not aware of the true costs associated with failures and the resulting loss of production. The losses in production may actu-

ally be as much as 9 times the maintenance costs. Both costs negatively affect the bottom line. The accounting systems are often so complex, and not properly integrated within the various divisions of a company, that it is nearly impossible to quantify the effects arising from a reliability improvement program.

#### **10. Bureaucratic Resistance to Change.**

It is natural, particularly in large corporations and utilities, to resist change to an existing process or method of operation. The reluctance to adapt to a changing technology, methodology, process, business approach, etc, climate is commonplace in industry.

#### **11. Lack of Awareness of Reliability Improvement Advantages.**

Middle-level managers and upper level administrators are often unaware of both root causes of their failures and the true cost to not eradicate them. Thus, it is understandable why these individuals are not aware of the overall advantages of a reliability improvement program.

#### **12. Failure to Apply Multimedia Approaches.**

Unfortunately, an overall approach that examines a system or process from a multimedia point of view is rarely found in industry today. There is much work to be done in this area, and many reliability improvements can be expected in the years to come.

As been noted, many companies and individuals are unaware of the advantages of reliability improvements. Until this situation is changed, progress in the reliability arena - as it has been done in the past - comes slowly.

Adapted from Handbook of Environmental Management & Technology by Douglas C. Branham