

As someone involved in the maintenance of your company's physical assets – which may include fixed and moveable plant, vehicles, long-term hire equipment, stock and spares – you will be aware of the bewildering amount of literature and guidance available on the subject.

# 10 questions to ask about your maintenance activity and physical assets

— a helpful check list drawn up by MCP Consulting and Training

**Y**ou may have just been delegated to review your company's asset portfolio – if a small company this may be in addition to your other responsibilities; if a larger company you may feel broadly comfortable with the concepts. Whatever your situation this check list, together with the case study examples of what can be achieved, will help you address the macro questions relating to maintenance and asset management.

## Do you know the following?

**01** Are all the assets on your computerised maintenance management system identified, registered and recorded?  
**YES / NO**

And do you know how many are not currently being used?  
**YES / NO**

**02** Do you know which assets (should they fail) present the greatest risk to your business? (in terms of):

- ◆ Business continuity **YES / NO**
- ◆ Health & Safety **YES / NO**
- ◆ Environment **YES / NO**
- ◆ Lost production output **YES / NO**

**03** Do you know the condition of all your assets and their level of reliability?  
**YES / NO**

**04** Do you have an effective preventive maintenance programme which will help reduce, or even prevent, breakdowns?  
**YES / NO**

**Case Example** Before their journey to world class operational excellence, Flexsys Rubber Chemicals in Wrexham found that their processes relied heavily on reactive maintenance -- so in terms of reactive maintenance they were world class. But they knew that in order to get the plant running properly they needed to introduce preventive

maintenance. They started implementing more preventive maintenance jobs, which led to work processes being strictly laid down which specified that a technician carrying out preventive maintenance should not be called to fix a nearby breakdown. This may have seemed counter productive, but they were trying to instill a culture of preventive maintenance routines being the key to moving forward. After about 18 months, there were fewer breakdowns and all their KPIs were being met. Finally the preventive routines began to eliminate problems and showed what was really going wrong.

**05** Do you know the utilisation and efficiency levels of your maintenance technicians?  
**YES / NO**

**Case Example** Regardless of the change programme a company is undertaking, success can only be achieved through staff engagement. Diageo's St James's Gate Guinness Brewery in Dublin developed an asset care strategy to drive a step change improvement in plant performance and reliability. The lessons learned from previous initiatives showed that when only a few key people were involved, focus would drop off. The main thrust of their improvement programme this time around was on team engagement and improving performance. This included:

- ▶ Shift Managers being accountable for their aspects of the asset care strategy.
- ▶ Incorporating targets for planning effectiveness and percentage continuous improvement.
- ▶ Focusing on maintenance and adding it to their existing management performance process.

Conformance to plan for preventive maintenance increased from 68% to 99%, and completed planned hours increased from 27% to 77% in 2 years (as a proportion of available man hours).

**06** Is the level of downtime due to major engineering projects less than 2%?  
**YES / NO**

**07** Do you know the scope for energy savings in your plant/business?  
**YES / NO**

**08** Do you want to reduce the amount you spend on spare parts?  
**YES / NO**

**09** Is the total cost of maintenance expenditure less than 5% of your operating costs?  
**YES / NO**

**10** Is your maintenance expenditure decreasing year on year?  
**YES / NO**

If you answered **NO** to more than two of the above questions then you are missing an opportunity, as both Flexsys and Diageo realised, to reduce your maintenance costs and improve your plant's performance, which will almost certainly result in lower production costs and a higher profit margin on product sales. Typically, you could be saving between 10-25% of your current maintenance expenditure and, at the same time generating benefits in your production operation of 10 times the maintenance savings.

Watch out for further revelations in our July/August issue.

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