Written by Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor
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Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor The Rodney Dangerfield refrain "We don't get no respect" keeps popping up again and again in maintenance circles. If we really want to change the image of maintenance and become the next hot business function, perhaps we should put a small e out front. It seems to work for e-Business and e-Commerce. What do you think of e-Maintenance? If we were to adopt e-Maintenance as a new functional title, what would e represent? Several possibilities come to mind.

e(fficient)-Maintenance.

An efficient maintenance organization has a certain measure of respect. It meets the expectations of most managers, especially those who have a traditional view of the maintenance function and demand "Do more with fewer people and less money." Efficient maintenance is a given. There are plenty of metrics we can use to track progress in this area, including maintenance cost compared to estimated replacement value and number of maintenance personnel compared to total plant personnel.

e(ffective)-Maintenance.

Although maintenance efficiency is always desirable, close analysis of maintenance work will show a substantial amount of it simply isn't effective; it doesn't contribute to availability, life extension, or functional reliability no matter how productive the work force. Effective maintenance commands a larger measure of respect. As management guru Peter Drucker put it: "Productivity is doing the job better, but doing the right job is more productive." Effective maintenance is measured by reliability performance metrics such as mean time between failure, uptime, and availability.

e(nterprise)-Maintenance.
Effective maintenance delivered efficiently is a worthy goal, but nothing gains much respect in the boardroom unless it is a value-adding activity that contributes directly to enterprise performance.

One measure that works well for enterprise performance is overall equipment effectiveness (OEE), which is the product of asset utilization (uptime), throughput, and acceptance (quality). OEE is scaleable. It can be applied effectively at the machine, production line, or the plant level and it can be linked to enterprise metrics such as return on net assets (RONA), economic value added (EVA), and shareholder value.

So, how do you spell e-Maintenance? It's easy. Just add up the "e"s. e(fficient) Maintenance + e(ffective) Maintenance + e(nterprise) Maintenance = **e(xcellent) Maintenance. MT**