

Hard Core Maintenance

Written by Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor
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Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor "Focus on your core competencies and outsource everything else." When I mentioned that business mantra in this column a couple months ago, I was referring to the possibility that a maintenance organization is ripe for outsourcing if it can't demonstrate that it is a core competency of the enterprise.

I believe that mantra works within the maintenance organization as well. Where would you rather focus your physical asset management time and resources? On activities that improve asset reliability and offer significant payback or on lesser supportive activities?

The answer is obvious, but there is a lot of work to do in getting there. The first step is to define your core competencies.

What might those core competencies be? They are often hard to identify because your comfort and skill level with each often color your judgment. And it makes a difference of where you stand in the competency continuum. The more competent you are, the better equipped you are to see the difference between core and noncore activities.

To make those difficult core-noncore judgment calls, the effective maintenance and reliability manager needs personal competency in several sectors. The SMRP Certifying Organization has identified five: business and management, process reliability, equipment reliability, people skills, and work management. Each of those interrelated core work practices has three elements: Strategy development and planning, implementation and measurement of results,

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and review and analysis of results and continuous improvement. It is likely that you will have to call on all of them before you can identify your core departmental competencies with any level of confidence.

When you take a hard look at what your organization is doing, you will undoubtedly find a significant portion of that work does not materially affect equipment reliability. Those are the activities to be transferred or eliminated.

But getting rid of them can be difficult. We are often quite good at some noncore competencies and are emotionally attached to them, making it hard to cut them loose.

And that's the trick—becoming hard core in your approach to maintenance and reliability. It is the difference between efficient maintenance and effective maintenance.

Hard-core maintenance is more than just doing things right. It is the commitment to doing only the right things and eliminating or outsourcing the rest. **MT**

