**Behind the Scenes**

Written by Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor
Thursday, 01 February 2001 09:03

Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor    I continue to be amazed by what goes on behind the scenes in business,        even within industries with which I am familiar. Every activity has     its specialized vocabulary and processes, and I enjoy learning about        them. Perhaps that is why I became an editor, to get an opportunity         to peek behind the curtain to see what's going on.

The output of many endeavors, great as they may appear from the user        side, can't be appreciated fully without some understanding of what        went into them. That is again being demonstrated to me as I work backstage        with members of the professional certification committee of the Society        for Maintenance & Reliability Professionals (SMRP). I'm learning        about the vocabulary, software, and processes of testing and what it takes to develop a program to assess and certify competency in the field        of reliability and maintenance.

The committee, which is expected to become the SMRP Certifying Organization,        is developing the content and infrastructure of a program for certifying        maintenance and reliability managers. An important element of our last        meeting was a half-day seminar by our consulting psycometrician. We        were introduced to the testing community's vocabulary: items (questions)        include stem options (multiple choices) made up of one key (correct        choice) and several distracters (incorrect choices).

We used specialized software to analyze the beta test given at the        SMRP conference last fall in Cleveland. It tracks everything from frequency        distribution of test scores to point-biserial values for individual        items to flag bad questions.

**Behind the Scenes**

Written by Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor
Thursday, 01 February 2001 09:03

The agenda included work on questions, as well as the development of infrastructure and processes that are congruent with values promulgated by National Organization for Competency Assurance.

The most important element of the process is the definition of capabilities to be tested and certified. SMRP has published a list of capabilities that the committee believes are important to successful equipment reliability, maintenance, and asset management operations. It is available through the "capabilities inventory" link near the end of the first overview article on the certification page .

The capabilities inventory details skills in five broad categories: Business and management, people, equipment reliability, manufacturing process reliability, and work management.

This list can provide the basis for taking your company leadership behind the scenes of reliability and maintenance activity. And, possibly, the basis for you to gauge what you need to develop before you invite them to peek behind the curtain. **MT**