

From Our Perspective: A Leaf From The Makeover Show Playbook

Written by Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor
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No specific program caught my attention while surfing television channels one recent evening. Instead, I was fascinated by the abundance of reality shows focusing on changing of the human condition.

The topic can be just about anything—*fashion, beauty, health, weight, home and garden, whatever*. It doesn't matter. All of these current "makeover" shows seem to follow a formulaic approach to promoting and managing change that closely resembles the classic change-management process model used to effect change and continuous improvement throughout industry.

In all cases, the show producers look for an ineffective or poor "before" condition in which the makeover recipients have recognized that their current state is no longer acceptable and are ready to make some changes. Next comes the assessment stage, where an expert panel assesses the current situation looking for both positive attributes or traits and negative ones, more kindly referred to as "areas of opportunity." Sounds much like an industrial environment, doesn't it?

In a maintenance department, an ineffective condition manifests itself as poor equipment availability and reliability, through systemic failure of both process and equipment. Step one of effecting change involves determining the current state through a personal assessment or a MOER—*Maintenance Operation Effectiveness Review*—to determine strengths we can capitalize upon, and areas of weakness or opportunity that will give valuable return on the change investment.

From the assessment, an objective list of needs (recommendations) is formulated into a plan of action for change, along with a budget. At the same time, a set of achievable goals tangibly outlining the desired outcome(s) is set in place to determine when a successful transformation has been attained (i.e., walking down a fashion runway, hitting a weight target before a wedding, realizing the perfect dream home or, in a plant, achieving maintenance reliability and

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availability targets). The plan of action and goals are then discussed and a change timeline is struck according to the show's format—*or maintenance department's timeline. Once agreed upon, the change process begins*

The second step almost always involves "decluttering." In industry, we work to rid ourselves of any non-value-adding process, method or inventory, including workflows, job plans, spare parts, etc. In a television makeover, the producers work with the recipient to eliminate old clothing, furniture, habits and attitudes that can and will sour any sustainable result. Decluttering breaks down destructive paradigms and opens the recipients' minds to new ideas, processes and approaches that will help grow the individual or business.

The third step is a facilitative process enacted to work on making changes by formulating, learning and putting into practice new approaches, methodologies and practices. This phase entails the plastic surgery, weight training, dieting, wardrobe building or, from industry's perspective, building and implementing new workflow designs, job plans, planning and scheduling processes, etc.

The final step is always the reveal—*showing how successful all of the efforts have been in achieving the intended results*. Many of the makeover shows even check back with their made-over recipients to learn if they've sustained their changes and moved on with further improvements. Similarly, in the maintenance world, we show the world a successful pilot program, and then move on to systemically grow the change throughout the department.

While life often imitates art, today's reality "makeovers" imitate a proven methodology for improvement. The main difference is in their ability to chronicle these journeys and keep their audiences hungry for more. Therein lies the lesson. When we "make over" a department, we should constantly strive to sustain the successes we achieve and move ahead with even more. Good Luck! **LMT**

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