

Zero Time: The New Challenge

Written by Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor
Friday, 01 October 1999 19:54



Robert C. Baldwin, CMRP, Editor The executive suite's challenge to "Do more with fewer people and less money" has escalated to "Do more with fewer people and less money ... NOW!" Our internal customer, the operations or production organization, expects us to respond in zero time. Zero Time. It's an interesting concept, and it's the focus of the Zero Time™ Research Project (www.bus.utexas.edu/~pearlson/zerotime) of the IC2 Institute at the University of Texas in Austin. Zero Time is a holistic customer-focused business philosophy containing five core disciplines:

Zero value gaps: Products or services custom fitted to each customer to maximize the value each receives. Values, of course, are different for different customers. They want the product or services tailored to their needs, delivered at the appropriate time, and at a price point that makes the deal satisfactory.

Zero learning lags: Management of the entire life cycle of knowledge--from creation to dissemination. It is suggested that the components of a zero learning lag organization include an environment for learning; management of the knowledge in useful chunks; and an infrastructure supporting seamless integration of computing, communication, and content technologies.

Zero management: Every person in the organization has the ability and the permission to do whatever needs to be done in order to produce value for customers. It is implied that people and teams are aligned with the corporate whole.

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Zero resistance: A process in which there are no obstacles to performing whatever tasks are required. Zero resistance requires that individuals have achieved personal mastery of tasks and that they are empowered to follow them through.

Zero exclusion: All people and organizations who need to be involved are included--automatically--with neither physical nor technological boundaries to limit accessibility. The Zero Time organization is a proactive organization that anticipates, senses, and responds to the environmental changes influencing completion of the corporation's mission and goals.

Reliability and maintenance practices and technologies fit nicely into these Zero Time buckets:

- Proactive maintenance and RCM advance the cause of zero value gaps
- Condition monitoring and computerized maintenance management systems facilitate zero learning lags
- Autonomous maintenance is the essence of zero management
- TPM is based on zero exclusion
- Planned maintenance promotes zero resistance.

What time is it in your maintenance operation? **MT**

