**Brighton Tru-Edge Assessment Interviews – Rick Seiter 12/20/2022**

**Bruce’s key opportunities**

1. Training new operators
   1. Takes the longest and hiring people is hard
   2. Minimum 3-4 weeks for level of comfort on easy jobs
   3. 4 operators required for 2 new machines
2. Forklift driver
   1. “Need to get product to and from the machine faster”
   2. One already hired, another being hired
   3. Preparing orders at machines but space is limited – no way to make room for more heads by their respective machines
   4. Not a lot of staging availability
3. Supervisor
   1. Hire another supervisor to help with flow of the day shift and improve organization of product
4. Adding machines
   1. “Only way to speed up tact time is with more machines”
   2. There is a certain amount of time it is going to take no matter what

* I don’t disagree with any of it
* All things we’ve talked about
* Training program is “weak” – hiring guys who don’t know what pressing or flanging is
* Hire, safety, then put them with
* Some of the guys tasked with training new operators are “not trainers”
* No measurements or steppingstones for training progression – mirrors what Bruce said
  + No way to know if/when to cut ties
* Good candidate – 2 months flange, 1 month press
  + Currently taking 6 to 12 months
* **Speed up training time to add value more quickly**
  + **Needs to be roadmap for training process steps**
  + **Evaluations, consistent documented feedback**

**Interview notes**

People

* Training hurdles
  + Requires working side by side with an experienced operator until comfortable
  + Pressing operators learn more quickly than flanging operators
  + Min 3-4 weeks to become comfortable on “easy jobs”
  + No standard for expected time to learn
* Operator responsibilities
  + Clean up – scrap from machines
  + Loading
  + Unloading
  + Changeover
* Forklift driver
  + One hired, one more to be hired
  + Expected to be preparing product at machines and loading/unloading when needed
* Supervisors
  + Expected to help with flow of the shop and organize of the product
  + Don’t have good measures of productivity
  + **What is being used to evaluate performance?**

Process

* Current staging process
  + Need to get product to and from the machine faster
  + Next days’ worth of work is prepared in a staging process but there is not much room by the machines to hold this
  + Shop footprint is very limited especially with a new machine – product often stages outside
  + Operators supposed to be writing on the product where it goes next – new process and not always followed
  + Guys will move product around the next stage, not necessarily the machine
    - General area where it will be put
  + Can’t have a staging area due to space constraints
  + If there’s not room in that general area, will put it outside causing need to find
  + Trouble happens with bottlenecks – we are push flow rather than a pull
  + Not enough people at the end process (flange and pickle)
  + **Increasing flange capacity to decrease bottleneck – but it will cause bottleneck at pickling**
  + Big opportunity – decrease the time outside of the processing time
    - Want to keep operators around machines
  + **Staging becomes especially difficult when there are bottlenecks**
  + **Because of bottlenecks, it may make sense to move guys around, but guys may not be trained on those areas / may not be any room or another machine for them to work on**
    - Is this a union issue? Need to keep guys working – guaranteed 40 hours a week
    - Can’t really say that we don’t have work
  + Adherence to time standards – what is allowed per piece
    - Confidence in time standards? Over the years have been the standard
    - Been a long time since they’ve been looked at – don’t have the skill level we once had
    - Equipment has deteriorated as well
    - Experience level and equipment are not what they used to be – takes longer than it used to. **Need new standards**
  + Where do jobs get behind schedule?
    - Hour’s standards are not correct
    - Operator performance
    - Machine is not up to quality – old
      * Guys complain that “The machines are junk”
    - At this point, these are all guesses. We have no measurements
* Loading and unloading
  + One forklift driver for the entire floor
  + **How is the communication with operators and forklift driver on when jobs may need unloading?**
  + Some guys can load and unload their own work with forklift
  + Each slot for a machine has the next order – but priorities change of the time
* Pit crew feasibility
  + Unlikely to be effective as there is not a lot of room for more than one person to change out a roll – may only shave off a couple of minutes
  + More room for a couple of guys for pressing machines
  + Still have to consider overhead – extra guys not built into the cost of the job
* CNC / lasers
  + New flanger will have CNC playback technology (?)
  + Trying to implement lasers to help with radius conformity – so far not working great for us

Management

* Lack of understanding of actual processing time
  + Operator could be waiting 30 minutes or more to start next job
  + System processing time measures wait time, flanging, unloading, change overs, etc. all in one
  + When one job “ends”, the next job “starts”
  + Nothing in the system measures the actual processing time separate from all of the other associated time
  + Have we ever looked at how to decrease non processing time as much as possible?
    - Up to forklift driver to have things ready to minimize wait time
    - Changeover / tooling – maximize setups but when pushing everything and behind with orders – cant utilize optimal setup – more changeovers requires to get next most urgent order
    - All of this time is rung on the job – non processing time should be built into the job but with all of the changeovers it’s probably not built in as much as is needed – this time is almost always undercooked
* Lack of time standards / lack of adherence to time standards
  + There are standard operations for each job, but they have been largely abandoned
  + No longer posting standards for operators to see and take advantage of
  + Each job is broken up into standard times, but standard times vary a lot based on operator and/or requirements – variance of several hours is not surprising
  + No accountability to time standards
  + Not necessarily accurate
  + Small head vs large head – time standards set up in the sales program
    - Not tracked very well
  + Productivity reports
    - Who works best at which machines
  + Measurements & numbers not visible
  + Guys don’t know them
  + “Needs to be measurements to hold the guys accountable”
  + KPIs
    - Individuals’ productivity
    - Rework – who is creating it?
      * We fix the rework, but we don’t resolve the problem
      * Rework problems should be cut and dry – end product should be clear
      * What varies is how we get there - everyone has a different method – may need standards on methods
  + We used to have supervision management on the floor at all times – “tried to empower the employees and they don’t want it”
  + “we’ve lost control of the shop because there’s no accountability – they do what they want” – supervisor management has not been at the level that is required for a long time
    - Any kind of measurement to show the guys where the business is going and where we are lacking in the shop
  + Nobody driving the floor in terms of:
    - Organizing the next orders, getting things ready for load/unload
    - Stop for breaks early
    - Staying off phones
    - Chat sessions
    - Etc.
  + 2nd shift has a supervisor
    - Is he out on the floor? Not as much as needed
    - No one for 1st shift – should fall on Bruce’s shoulders
    - Plant manager, HR, customer service, scheduler
    - Bruce needs a right-hand man
  + Accountability example
    - We had a scheduler that tracked their times
    - He would keep the foreman informed on when operators should be finished with jobs
    - Any job >30 mins more than scheduled would require documentation
    - Could definitely be justified, but someone answered to it

Scheduling

* Current scheduling
  + Prioritize some machines for certain customers
    - May run better/higher quality and adhere better to the standards required by the customer
  + Changes to the schedule happen “every day”
* Sales vs. ops
  + “Sales driven shop” from day one but slowly changing - sell to availability
  + Sales is “well aware” of lead time and capacity issues
  + “If the office calls and says to change it, it will change”
  + **Is there a lock period for scheduling? What is optimal?**
* New scheduling process
  + Bruce is involved in questions about scheduling requirements as this is being built out. **Are others? What needs to be considered that isn’t?**
  + Still being tested at various stages but showing progress – operational in next ~3 months
  + **Concerns about adoption / sustainability?**
  + With lack of technology on floor, this will likely produce printed paper schedules for leadmen to manage
  + This initiative is showing cryogenics as the backlog
* What did we miss?
  + My biggest thing from a quality aspect is discipline and accountability
  + Two biggest drivers we lack in
* What is number one priority?
  + Supervisors
  + Driving workflow and driving work force
  + Reporting tool? Measurements to tell supervisor and operators about performance.
  + Not correcting the problems – allowing toxic activity to remain
  + Would reporting be well received?
    - Posting numbers for everyone to see could be a problem
    - Would hope it creates pressure for guys to step up and take initiative or guide others