**Class Summary:**

During the 20th century we saw a huge revolution in how industries work, innovators such as McDonalds and Ford came along and revolutionized and changed our society forever. McDonalds analyzed and improved the flow in their restaurants and became one of the leading restaurants providing the service of fast food. McDonalds in a sense created a highly efficient assembly line with humans, this improved consistency, lowered cost, and reduced wait time. Despite not inventing the concept of fast food (White Castle) McDonalds innovated on past methods and paired together a consistent product with a fast low-cost service. Ford analyzed the manufacturing process and significantly reduced the time and cost of assembly for motor vehicles. Ford was the first person to use a continuously moving synchronous assembly line. Ford drew inspiration from other innovators such as Ransom Olds and instead of manually moving the car, Ford’s method would have a machine move the car while workers were stationed around ready to install parts. This new method significantly reduced the production time and improved quality. While there were improvements, there were also tradeoffs with only one color of car being offered. Ford hired the best employees he could find, paying his employees much higher than the industry average, and on top of this he pioneered the 8-hour workday. By switching to 8-hour workdays it allowed him to run 5x8 shifts around the clock allowing 24-hour coverage for the facility. In the end, both Ford Motor Company and McDonald were a large part of the start of mass manufacturing and assembly line work. By innovating and taking risks they proved that costs could be lowered while quality was increased at the same time.

**Reflection:**

Through life we all fall into routines, where actions evolve from being deliberate to being second nature. Ford and McDonald’s understood this concept and recognized that the way things are done is not the best way. You may ask yourself, how is this “rule” wrong? The manufacturing processes had been in place for years. Changing these habits was extremely difficult but the potential of doing so was immense. If we can learn one thing from this is that the way we have done tasks before is most likely imperfect. Now this raises another question, “if this is the result what is preventing more innovation?”. The major issue is people, people do not like change. In my experience working in manufacturing and distribution it is way easier to create a radical new concept and improve an existing concept. For instance, if I wanted to produce a change at my old job and it involved switching the way a forklift operator functioned slightly, it would most likely not happen. Understanding that human phycology says humans are resistant to change, this resistance is always present in a business and the sooner we realize it, the better. For instance, let’s say I want to move a customer to a different area in our warehouse. The numbers say it will be better, fresh sets of eyes say it will be better, and the benefits are immense, from reducing traffic, better racking for the product, and reducing driving times. This seems like a slam dunk of a change but in the end many operators do not like the change. They don’t want to worry about learning where that new product will go (despite their screens telling them) and would rather function in the existing way. If I want to make this change, I have two options: a. moves the product without buy on from lift operators or b. talk with the operators and compromise. Now you may say, let’s just move the product without buying on, but that is a really bad decision, losing buy on from lift operators who are the backbone of this process, is a significant harm to our entire process. So, we decided to do the second option, we talked with the operators and saw what ideas they have, they are requesting we investigate a different product as they believe that one is causing significant issues. We investigate it; find it won’t have quite as large of an impact as the other customer but is still significant. We have ended up deciding to move this product as it will still have a similar effect all be it less significant effect while gaining buy on from our operators. This example highlights Ford and McDonald’s innovated significantly and we all should learn that the existing ways we complete a task are guaranteed to not be the most efficient. Understanding that improving efficiency in a production environment is a tricky game of management where you must decide what is the most important to you. It’s always important to remember, a happy worker is a productive and fast worker, and Henry Ford learned this early on. It made a world of difference.