

# The Importance of Productivity

**I**t's no secret what attributes are viewed as keys to being a successful UBC Millwright: Skill. Productivity. Attitude. In fact, flipping through this newsletter should produce to the reader the importance of daily high levels of productivity that every SSMRC member is expected to...produce.

LABOR IS HISTORICALLY ONE OF, if not the, most expensive part of a building or renovation project. The demand to be productive has never been more important, as budgets are shrinking and work schedules are accelerating. That scenario sets the stage for union millwrights to excel, thanks to their experience, training, and work ethic.

Industry studies are able to draw direct links to contractor profitability based on productivity of the work crew. In fact, just a 10 percent increase in productivity nets a 100 percent increase in profitability, and vice versa - just a 10 percent dip in productivity cuts profitability in half.

Productivity is not only attained on the jobsite, it is also found around the work area, as well. By shaving 24 minutes of down-time from the manpower each day, profitability hikes 50 percent. Double that

to saving 48 minutes of down-time, and profitability increases 100 percent. Those minutes can be recaptured by clocking in on time, keeping to the allotted break time, taking a true 30-minute lunch, and working until quitting time.

For example - taking an extra five minutes in the morning break may seem insignificant to the individual, but if the half of a 20-man crew does that, suddenly that five minutes grew to 50 minutes of extra down-time, every day. Times that by a five-day work week, and productivity is hindered by 250 minutes - or more than four hours - each week. Each month? That's more than 16 hours lost. Now add in getting back to work five

minutes late after lunch. Same math - same loss. But combined with that slip on the morning break, and now we have a full 8-hours lost each week, and nearly a week of work lost every month.

"Productivity is our number one issue," said Howard Guhne, Southeast Operations Manager for Atlantic Plant Maintenance, one of the largest employers of millwrights in the SSMRC.

*"We believe productivity is a result of excellent safety and quality. If we can get our safety and quality in check, we will keep the men working."*

"We believe productivity is a result of excellent safety and quality. If we can get our safety and quality in check, we will keep the men working."

The lack of safety is a clear productivity killer. Accidents have to be recorded with OSHA and

affect insurance rates. Carelessness by a few causes the contractor to pay higher rates for the whole workforce.

Guhne also said the need for re-work can contribute significantly to a project's costs if the millwrights aren't skilled in the task at hand. If the work is done improperly, the job must be done again. Worse, if the error caused

*Continued on page 5*



By Steve Cothron, Director



In this initial report to the membership of the Southern States Millwright Regional Council, I say “greetings. It’s a real pleasure to provide this article. I am the Eastern District Director, working with Mike Hamilton, Paul French, David Park and Tim Brown; servicing the five states of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee for the Council. The primary area I service is Central and South Florida. We have an assortment of industries we work in, with turbine work being our biggest market. We also have work on airports, chemical plants and light manufacturing.

IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE being in this new council that we are all in today. The ability to call the affiliate locals in our council and get trained millwrights is invaluable. That also works for all the affiliate locals but, especially for the membership of our council. All of our members should see the great opportunities we all have now.

Work in Florida has been affected by the terrible economic times, like the rest of the country, but we are rebounding fast. We have had significant amounts of work so far this year, particularly in the power industry. We are just finishing up a huge outage at Port St Lucie Nuclear plant and should conclude a smaller, but nice outage at Turkey Point Nuclear plant. We have had and have gas turbine projects going on at TECO Bayside, TECO Polk, FP&L Manatee, FP&L Ft Myers, KUA, Stanton, Oleander, Treasure Coast, Progress Hines, Progress Crystal River, Seminole Midulla, Progress Bartow, Turkey Point fossil, Lauderdale, Shady Hills, JEA Brandy Branch and others. We pretty much always have work year-round in the phosphate industry. We have ongoing projects at Miami and Ft. Lauderdale airports. Another project will be starting soon at Orlando airport.

We are very proud to have an addition at the Enviro-Focus battery recycling site in Tampa going on, which is all new construction. We also appreciate the members from North Florida and Georgia who came in to help do this project, with us

being so busy in the power industry. The plant is loaded with hundreds of feet of conveyor and machinery. It is a really busy area, with many crafts working in a very congested worksite. We are constantly stressing to all the members to keep safety as a top priority.

We are expecting it to slow down after the spring outage season, but to speed up again towards the end of the summer, with many more outages in the power plants. I would like to encourage all the members to get the training classes required for the turbine work, as your opportunities for

employment will only increase.

In closing, I want to say that your new council has an outstanding staff, with more experience and passion than I ever imagined possible in such a short time that we have been together. You have council representatives who are really working hard to help create

opportunities for you, the membership, to provide a better living for you and your families.

Our Executive Secretary Treasurer (EST) Dennis Donahou has many years of experience, including being a very successful EST in a previous council. This council, with our fine EST, the excellent staff, and all of our fine members is poised to really stand out - not only in the South, but to the owners nationally - as the organization to get the best value possible to do their millwright work.



Caption

## The Importance of Productivity

*Continued from page 3*

damaged equipment, then re-work and replacement of equipment will all but nullify any profitability, not to mention customer satisfaction.

Productivity isn’t difficult to achieve. It is simply how well a work converts resources into service. How a contractor utilizes his labor pool, the skills of his millwrights, and his own management style supports the productivity effort. The individual skills, positive attitude and work ethic of a millwright will ensure a high level of productivity on a consisted basis.

Professional millwrighs can also ensure high productivity levels by taking care of themselves. Physical fitness, proper nutrition, and even a good sleep schedule all contribute to sound decision-making, stamina in task completion, and dependability.

“I can’t stress enough how important the delivery of productivity is for this Regional Council,” said SSMRC Executive Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Donahou. “Our contractors expect a productive workforce, and we are going to provide that them every day, on every job site. There is no room for unproductive millwrights on any job site we staff.”

In his speech at the 2010 UBC Convention, General Vice President Doug Baner spoke almost exclusively about the importance of productivity. “With the economy in the worst shape we’ve ever seen, attitude and productivity are more important than ever. But, when you combine the training that our members receive with the right attitude, it is an unbeatable combination.”

The bottom line is, if a millwright doesn’t produce, he or she is not an asset to anyone - not the general contractor, the project manager, or the end-user. The foundation of the UBC is delivering skilled, productive work every day.

Whatever you do, whenever you do it, be the best and be productive. It’s the edge that SSMRC millwrights have on the competition, and it’s the asset that our contractors rely upon.