

RE: Continuous Improvement Board

What are we showing you here?

This is our Continuous Improvement Board. A visual method to capture and show the progress of each suggestion turned in by the employees of TC Industries.

Why do we have it?

To utilize the mental capital of our employees, and to give them a visual tool on the progression of their idea. Working intimately with their job, they are the closest ones to give a proper perspective to make improvements at their work area. This gives the employee an opportunity to make changes to their job. You never know where the next great suggestion will come from.

Why this method?

Our previous method of capturing the suggestions was not structured enough to consistently follow through from start to finish. Some things were started and then stopped, and some never went anywhere. The employees can see what is being done with their suggestions.

What ideas are being Captured?

The ideas can concern anything that will help improve how we do things. The general ideas that are concentrated on are those concerning: **People** (health and safety issues), **Environment** (ways to conserve energy or consumables, or ways to eliminate if possible), **Quality** (issues that affect the quality of our work), **Customer Satisfaction** (ways to satisfy the customer with improved services), **Profitability** (ways to reduce costs and utilize our current equipment).

Safety issues are the pink cards.

What this board is not to be used for: general maintenance issues, or HR issues or grievances.

How does it work?

1. An employee who wants to make a suggestion comes to this board and fills out one of the cards. We call them "T" cards. There are a few places on the card that needs to be filled out. They place the card into the rack.
2. The T card board monitor checks the board daily to see if there are any new suggestions. The monitor is the one who scans the card into the system, assigns the cards to an owner, and moves the cards along the board as needed. An owner is the person who will be working on that suggestion.

On the board there are various categories that the suggestion can fall into. For each category a person is assigned to handle the suggestion that fall into his area. In most situations, the person in charge of that theme or area will be the owner of the problem.

3. The owner reviews the problem or suggestion, determines a course of action then meets with the originator to come up with an agreed upon solution. Let me repeat that again it is very important. Before anything is started the originator and the owner both must agree that they understand the suggestion and they both agree on the proposed solution.
4. As each part of the process is finished, the paperwork is filled out and the card moves to the right until it is resolved or finished.

Any problem or suggestion that can be solved in less than 30 days is considered **short term**. Any problem or suggestion that will take longer than 30 days is considered **long term**.

This is a new system for us and so far, we have limited the amount of employee suggestions to one a month. We have about 73 employees in this division on all 3 shifts. We were not sure if we had enough people to take care of all the suggestions and we want to make this board a positive thing. Our goal for now is to make sure everyone is giving us their one suggestion each month.

What is working?

The willingness of employees to make suggestions.

What is not working?

Several people will make the same suggestion even after it has been posted for a while.

Maintenance issues are still brought up on these cards even though we said these cards are not supposed to be used for maintenance issues.