

Executive Management by Avoiding Operations (not)

By Paperitalo Staff

I had a visit from a friend this week who is currently working for a team that bought out a bankrupt plastics converting company.

My friend reports that in five years the former CEO had visited most of the manufacturing plants once, and stayed less than half a day. No word on whether he bothered to visit customers, although he apparently had time to lead the executive life--multiple corporate jets at his disposal and so forth. And although the plants had little maintenance (as you know, one of my pet peeves), the planes were well maintained. (His excuse?--Federal regulations.) Now, some companies are so large that CEO visitations to each manufacturing facility on a regular basis may be nearly impossible. In such cases, there had better be good #2's that can make regular trips.

Why should executives make such trips? A few reasons:

1. Despite modern electronic connections, an eyeball level inspection has still not been replaced.
2. Visits boost the morale of local employees.
3. To talk to the local politicians, gauge where the facility stands in the community at large, and get wind of complaints, pending taxes and so forth.

So, if your executives have not been to see you lately and you are in a position to do the inviting, do so. It is a good deal all the way around. Who knows? You might even get them to throw a few capital dollars your way in next year's budget.

And when you have the executive(s) in, it is a good time to get them to review the company's safety policy and overall safety performance. They should be leading the overall safety initiative and should emphasize safety during their visit.

Be safe and we will talk next week. ##