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## ***Maestro's Weekend***

By Paperitalo Staff

I once knew a person who aspired to be a mill manager. When he reached that position, the first rule he laid down was that he was not to be bothered on the weekends. He lasted about two months, and, no, it was certainly not me.

At this same mill, there was a propensity to do trial runs and so forth on the weekends. These of course, usually turned into a disaster when they did not run well and the mill was shorthanded when it came to people being available to right the listing ship.

If you count weekends, nominally, from about 16:00 on Friday until about 8:00 on Monday, you will soon see the "weekend" accounts for 38% of the week. This can easily make the difference in whether a mill is profitable or not.

Our imaginary maestro, which we have been talking about for the past two weeks, knows this. Further she knows she has to set up her mill to run the easiest grades possible on the weekends. This probably means the heaviest grades, and if the mill has coated and uncoated grades, the uncoated should be run on the weekends.

The weekends, when resources are limited, should be a time to set the mill up to do its easiest work. Run trials midweek, when all hands are on deck. Do maintenance midweek, when internal and external resources are available.

And consider nights a subset of weekends. Try to keep them as smooth as possible. For in reality, the only time all hands are available is generally the forty hours or so of day shift, Monday through Friday, or less than 24% of the total week. The tough stuff should be focused on these times, not off shift, not weekends.

Maestro also has a weekend preparatory meeting mid-Friday afternoons, too. This meeting is late enough to be timely on known conditions but early enough to do something about them. Usually 14:00 to 15:00 hours is a good time to start it. And, of course, there will be a weekend coverage and backup on-call schedule for distributed at the meeting.

Morning meetings on the weekends are vital, perhaps more vital than any other day. Few people are around and they need to see each other to handle whatever might be going on or any maintenance issues that crop up. Forgo the morning meeting on weekends at your peril. And by the way, some of the most productive morning meetings I have ever attended have been on the weekends.

There can be a burst of creativity and it may be a time to get some items cleared from the agenda. Given a choice, were I in a mill again and had to make a choice, I would attend morning meetings on the weekend over about any other gathering I can think of. They are a good time to get things done.

Safety is particularly serious on the weekends. The EMT availability may be limited as well as resources that know how to do emergency shutdowns. If your mill is deficient in any of these areas, now is the time to correct them.

Be safe and we will talk next week. ##