



Grunau Company contributed an article for the “2012 Best Practices” book that PRSM, Professional Retail Store Maintenance Association, published. The book consists of various real-life stories by businesses who help forge improved standards in facilities management.

The PRSM Best Practices books are invaluable resources containing many different types of solutions that help employers work smarter. Grunau’s article follows:

REDUCED DASHBOARD TIME AT SUPPLY HOUSES

AUTHOR Ted Angelo, Executive Vice President
COMPANY Grunau Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of APi Group



CHALLENGE:

Time spent on material handling is one of the major wastes in the industry. Companies are always looking for ways to improve and streamline their processes. While working with a local material supplier on improving the process of receiving their material at jobsites, it was discovered that the amount of time spent waiting for material at supply houses could be reduced.

BEST PRACTICE:

A local vendor supplied reports of order time and the company used the GPS systems on company trucks to identify time spent at supply houses so a baseline could be established regarding the company's status and what improvements were later made. Starting in January 2009, workers were taught to improve communication between employees and the supply houses as well as improve the daily task planning process.

By using a set of standard questions given to all employees on business cards, employees should identify what material they need before the job starts. Employees were also asked to call ahead for all orders so the supply house can check stock and compile the order.

- Checking stock reduces the chance of arriving at a supply house only to realize the item is a special order only or the supplier had just run out of the item.
- Calling ahead allows the supply house time to compile the order beforehand, reducing the amount of time workers need to wait for material.

RESULTS:

By calling ahead, the supply houses obtain improvements in their counter times and have more time to check order accuracy before employees arrive for pick up. The improvements with employees' task planning and communication has cut the amount of time spent at supply houses in half. A goal has now been set of three to five minutes to collect materials at supply houses, and employees have proven this is achievable since 50 percent of the visits are five minutes or less currently.

VERIFICATION OF EFFICIENCY & SAVINGS CAPTURED:

A reduction in "wait time waste" has been measured, and a cost savings of \$12,000 has been realized in the first six months since the process began. This results in cost savings that are passed on to retail customers because of the decrease in labor time. The end result is a reduced charge to the customer.

2008 Average vendor visit time:

Before process improvement

- Vendor 1 = 23.23 Minutes
- Vendor 2 = 23.11 Minutes
- Vendor 3 = 23.00 Minutes

2010 Average vendor visit time:

After process improvement

- Vendor 1 = 11.97 Minutes
- Vendor 2 = 17.61 Minutes
- Vendor 3 = 16.00 Minutes

