



TALENT:TALECRIS

Talecris Takes Control of Equipment Reliability through ToPR

Our vision is to be the recognized global leader in developing and providing vital protein therapeutics. Achievement of this vision requires a firm commitment from us, as well as to the maintenance of our equipment. So, in early 2007, we launched Total Process Reliability (ToPR).

ToPR, pronounced "Topper" by employees, is a discipline based on accountability, shared asset management, equipment stewardship, and employee engagement. We see ToPR as an ideal solution to equipment problems that have the potential to plague productivity.

Richie Hogg, a company veteran with nearly 17 years of production experience in various departments, is also the site facilitator of ToPR. "We are finding ways to work together and to make our equipment more reliable," Hogg said.

ToPR was initially met with resistance on the part of some employees. Eddie Hairr, Senior Production Specialist said, "In the beginning, technicians were apprehensive. Now I have too many volunteers for each scheduled event. People want to be part of something successful."

EQUIPMENT IMPROVEMENT TEAMS HELP DEFINE THE RELIABILITY CULTURE

What happened to alleviate employee's unease? "We formed Equipment Improvement Teams (EIT) to take a formal approach to bringing maintenance, operations and engineering together," said Hogg. "We take a piece of equipment and restore it to like-new condition. In learning about the equipment, employees become ambassadors for the culture we're building."

The EIT events focus on teaching employees how to care for the equipment. During the week, the team develops standards and Single-Point Lesson Plans (job aids) to help maintain the equipment condition. ToPR stresses that maintenance of mission-critical equipment is the responsibility of all who have a role in its function.

Technician Julie Monteiro realized the value of the collaborative aspects of the ToPR implementation. She said, "Having the operators and mechanics working together to refurbish the Westfalias bridged a gap between us. Because of this program, operators and mechanics are speaking and understanding the same language. Educating employees was time well spent. We have become ambassadors of the program."

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL SUPPORT PROMOTES OWNERSHIP

Cross-departmental training is another tactic utilized by ToPR. "The maintenance department teamed up with trainers in the purification department to provide hands-on assembly training. This resulted in fewer assembly errors," explained Maintenance Technician Ronald Crocker.

Joe Standley, a purification technician, exited the training sessions with an understanding of how to manage the centrifuges on the floor. "The ToPR process showed us exactly what kind of damage was occurring and what was being done to cause it," Standley said.

Another component of the team's training involved "5S" events, which stands for Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain. Focusing on mechanical order helps establish a respect for the equipment. It also creates a department-wide sense of ownership.

One metric used to track ToPR effectiveness is Mean Time Between Failure (MTBF), which measures failures against operating hours. As a result of the EITs, one Westfalia centrifuge's MTBF increased from an average 21 days between failures to 415 days and counting. The numbers don't lie, so it becomes apparent that ToPR is working.

Kevin Pait, director of Plant Engineering and Maintenance, chairs the ToPR Steering Council, which is made up of Talecris' senior leadership. "Cultural change is slow, but we're moving in the right direction," said Pait.

Because of ToPR, the production of life-enhancing therapies is more efficient, orderly and productive, directly reflecting two of the company's seven core values: Operational Excellence and Teamwork. Most importantly, it assists employees in achieving a vision they believe in — providing therapies that improve people's lives. ■ Contributed by Kevin Pait, Director of Plant Engineering and Maintenance



▲ TOP LEFT: Technician Joe Standley working on the Westfalia during an EIT

▲ TOP RIGHT: Maintenance Technician Ronald Crocker inspecting the Westfalia shaft

▲ BOTTOM LEFT: Purification Technician Julie Monteiro polishing the edges during the Westfalia EIT

▲ BOTTOM RIGHT: John Koussolis (R), purification engineer, and Bruce Edwards (L), purification technician, working on the Westfalia during an EIT event