



Field Training Services Newsletter

"Improving the bottom line through production training."

Tip of the Month

I am starting a series on the 12 things that I think will make a remodeling company successful in production. It is not a 12 step process but the 12 taken together and practiced as a system will help make any production department successful. The first is Good Estimating.

Estimating is usually thought of as a sales function and not as a production function. So what does it have to do with production?

It is a communication tool. Correct or not it communicates to the production team the thoughts of the estimator. The dollars can be easily converted to man hours. This helps explain what the estimator was thinking. In some cases it can keep production from spending too much time on something that the estimator saw as a small task. If the production people see what they believe is an error they can talk to the estimator and clarify what they were thinking or perhaps learn another way of getting it done.

The estimate is a goal setter. Many of us are not goal oriented people making sticking to a budget/estimate difficult. We allow life to happen to us instead of controlling it to the extent we can. A dollar amount in an estimate should act as a goal for the production team. "How do I get it done for that" should be the question not "Let's see how long it takes". Asking that question can change the outcome dramatically! By asking "how long" we set ourselves up to learn new techniques and to discover ways of getting something done that we otherwise would not have seen.

The estimate is goals broken into smaller goals. Related to the above section but a little different is the idea that very few of us can imagine how long \$50,000 in labor will last. By breaking it into demo, framing, supervision, etc. we can get a grip on the overall time frame of a job.

An estimate must be based in reality. Production people tend to focus on detail and so a good estimate must be focused on reality. I met a company once that added a buffer to the cost per hour on each task to be sure the company was making money. It worked well for the net profit but the production people were very discouraged. In talking to them it became clear that they were being "graded" on meeting the hours not the budget. The hours were always over but the budget was not. By bringing reality to the estimate the company can solve many issues. If an estimate is based on what it takes us to get the work done via the job cost reports then production can meet the challenge.



Personal News

August has been a great month! At the end of July the lobster count was 56 I was having a great year. Having been away for two weeks and then some messy weather, "losing" 3 traps for a week, makes it even more incredible. Along with that, traditionally August is a slower month and eventually the summer is over. This year was different!

It started August 7 when some friends from Maryland came to visit for the weekend. Determined they would eat my lobsters while here we headed out about 3 Pm on that Friday to "check the traps". We found 4 traps and brought in 10 lobsters! After catching some fish we re-baited the traps and headed for home. Mission accomplished. On Sunday afternoon, two days later we headed out again hoping to at least get a few for supper before they had to head home on Monday morning. End result 9 more!



Sunrise over Watch Hill



My lobster cooker

August 12 there were 4 more, August 14 there were 13 , August 18 there were 9, August 22 there were 10 bringing the total so far to 111! Then on August 29 a friend



13 lobsters where I like them!

from Seattle came and shared the experience with me. We brought in 10! as of Sept 1 the count is 121.

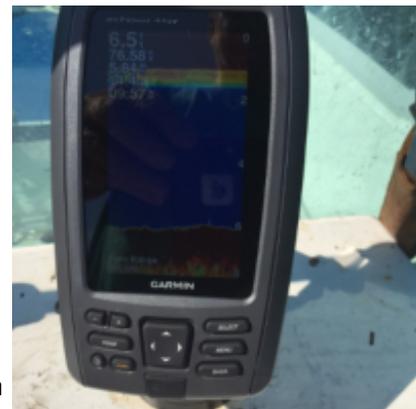
People have asked if I ever get tired of eating lobster. Well this year has come close! I have found that I am fond of lobster salad either in a potato roll or on a Ritz cracker!



Best lobster roll in New England!

A few other items of note. My depth finder that I use for finding rocks and such for fishing as well as setting traps developed a glitch and would run for a bit and then when jostled a little would shut off. So off I go to West Marine. And home I come with a new Garmin depth/fish finder, plotter, etc.

It does more than I imagined! Second, I have entered the



New toy!

modern age. My wife bought me a Smart Phone! And guess what - I like it! Its a little big for carrying around but it makes getting emails and messages so much easier.

Third, the family held the third and final farewell to my mom on Monhegan Island on August 21. Many of her old friends from the island were able to share thoughts and memories with us as well as have a great meal together. Thank you to all of you that expressed sympathy to me over the last couple months.

Product Information

New Production Managers Roundtable Forming! I am facilitating Roundtable meetings for Remodelers Advantage focused for production managers. These meeting are designed to bring non competing companies together and allow the exchange of ideas as well as challenge each PM to be better people managers. If you are interested in something like this feel free to call me (401-348-96980 or Remodelers Advantage (301-490-5620/301-490-5620) for details.

On Site Consulting Opportunities.

For those do not know I offer consulting at your office on production systems and helping the company be more efficient. This involves a two day visit. On the first day I do interviews of employees and the owners to see where the problems are. The afternoon of the first day is spent with the decision makers to discuss what I found and what can be done to correct any issues. The second day is spent doing training for everyone based on the findings of the first day.

Upcoming Speaking Events

Remodelers Advantage Community Meetings

Oct 26-30, 2015

Dallas, TX

Remodeling Show

Sept 30 - Oct 2, 2015

Chicago, IL

JLCLive in Portland, OR

Dec 3-4, 21015

International Builders Show

Las Vegas, NV

Jan 19-21, 2016

Remember, investing in the people that spend the money, may be the best investment you ever make!

Sincerely,

Timothy Faller
Field Training Services

401-348-9698

www.leadcarpenter.com