

6:55 am

Fisher Body Historical Team

1-11-06

Interviewer = Marilyn Coulter

Interviewee = Kevin Beard

Seniority - 8-21-73 Cap 6-21-82 Fisher Body

Education: High School = BA with grad work

Military = No English Degree.

Married = yes = (4) children (3) here (2) grandchildren

* Father worked for 42 years in Oldsmobile
Raised in Grand Lodge.

* Worked at Oldsmobile in 1973 at 17 years old, at Plant II of Oldsmobile; then was rehired in at ~~Fisher~~^{Oldsmobile} Body in 1976. Also worked at Plant III temporarily while on layoff from Plant II about 6 months.

- Fisher Body then called in June of 1982 and hired in there to present

- Fisher vs Plant II, big difference between parts and auto production. Plant II had a quota each shift that could be attainable, but Fisher you had to be on the line constantly all shift long.

- First Day = Paint shop on the "wet deck" which was a sounding job, was hard.

= First supervisor was Ted Thelen in paint. Some of the people working with Kevin actually would quit and look for other jobs in the city of Lansing.

= During their first 90 days you had no control over what job you got

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Condescending supervision talked down to from other co-workers. No help from them either. Once over there was some relief from co-workers but not from your supervisor.

= First supervisor = Ted Thelen = Kevin wanted a Friday night off. Ted said flat out no. Till this day Kevin had not forgiven him for not giving him Vacation.
= Still in point he moved from the "wet deck" to "Main color", which is where the final layers of paint are applied. The paint booth was very dirty, sticky, very hard to remove ~~it~~ if it got on you.

= Safety issue there weren't a many ~~safety~~ things given to employees but gloves and boots ~~but~~ but quality was an issue.

No formalized training in the paint booth.
= Mostly in point there was tag relief system which is 1 person at a time on break. Mass relief was where the entire dept went on break at the same time. Bathroom breaks were hard to get because higher tenority people would be condescending to you and not want to relieve you. When the new system came in, all people in the booth were dirty and sticky, so some co-workers would not want

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to be around them in the break room or benches outside the booth.

1986 C.U. rules changed that every employee had to be trained for Hazardous Communication classes. Kevin interviewed for this job and got it. He liked this kind of work.

There was a period of time when Kevin worked at Aldenwhite on final assembly on a job that was very hard. He had bruises from leaning in and out of the car on some jobs on the line.

Layoffs = This was a constant problem during the middle 1970's and 1980's. Being laid off meant that you would go from plant to plant in the city of Lansing. But while laid off, you could draw unemployment and "SUB" pay, which is supplemental unemployment benefits that were paid together with your unemployment pay.

During his teaching of this kind of training most people didn't have trouble with a co-worker teaching them. Some didn't like it.

Culture in Plant = sometimes there were long term friendships that became good on a day to day basis, dinners, sympathy cards, collections were taken up for people in need. People helping each other was also on a day to day basis, so friendships were formed.

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- Fishes vs other plants = Most people move the same from plant to plant, but some people grow together as a family at work.
- Good supervision = F. Caring, helpfulness, explain what is going on.
 - Bad supervision = no explanation, wondering not helping you at all in your job.
- * Kevin realized that the paint booth was staffed with plant people and there was a better quality jobs coming out of paint.
- = The next part of his training was in the safety office, all the chemicals in the plant had to be labbed, everything in the plant.
 - = Then after several months doing this he was tagged to come into the training dept. Doing jobs to track and schedule people for yearly training in safety. Eventually Kevin became joint safety trainer.
- Some reactions from people encouraged him to do this but some supervisors did not want an hourly person telling them what to do with their own employees.
- This training lasted for 5 years then went back to the body shop and trim dept. To Kevin this was very frustrating. Trying to maintain a program like this for a number of years and then being told to go back to production was very demeaning to Kevin.

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Pranks # a cup of water on top of a hoist at Plant #, goosing people or making noise for jumpy people. One person in particular would move his arms or feet because he was jumpy. Most of these were o.k. but sometimes people get hurt.

Fisher was much less of the going on

Make up of plant - i.e. race, gender, etc.

male dominated wherever he worked, predominantly white males, females put up with a lot of abuse from co-workers. During his time people are more sensitive today than in the past. Race - Kevin had never experienced working with blacks, mexicans etc.

His father became friends with minorities where he worked at over at Oldsmobile.

Kevin was always looking for an opportunity to move forward and eventually became elected to the Education Champion job.

Eventually he became training rep. appointed from 1995-2002 then reduced back to the line

TAP = Kevin utilized this program. Tuition Reimbursement Program was available under the present contract from one to another. People would be surprised at how many employees working in the plant have degrees from college such as a Bachelors or Masters Degree.

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City Council in East Lansing = Kevin was always involved in things happening in his neighborhood. He was then put on the Planning Commission for 7-8 years. In 2001 he ran for city council and lost, but in 2005 he successfully ran for city council and won election for this event.

A lot of his support has come from his co-workers, friends and supervisor.

Night Shift = This was a major toll on your wife and kids who worked days.

- There are some other co-workers who have served as elected officials in their cities.

Capital of Quality = People of Fisher body have a good understanding of their work, pride, quality and a good reputation for background. Also they are willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done on a daily basis.

He was a facilitator for E.P.G., which is employee program involvement ~~a~~ setup. Some people even Mgt would not recognize these programs at all. Even hourly employees did not support these either. Mgt today is more aware of this process but this still goes back to the old days when you didn't stop the line. Line workers supervisors vs Contract Bases = Contract bases had very little enthusiasm in their work, but they had a short-

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time to actually to work at Fisher Contract
losses believed they were there to hand
out orders, this created a very hostile
work environment in the plant.

* Happiest Moment = we went head to head
with the National Bureau of training
records. Lonsing was working well enough
without outside influence.

* Working with people in the safety and
training departments over the years, after
the day is done, when your job is
respected by your co-workers and
you have made an accomplishment in
your own world and made a difference.

* Closing of Fisher Body: Although he has not
spent all his time at Fisher, but we have
a brand new plant to go to in Delta
Township plant. We have the right people
at the right time, with a brand new
plant after some other plant closings
in the United States and abroad.