



WORKINGSMARTER

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In some ways, there is a 'me' in team

In developing, implementing and facilitating the Working Smarter Training Challenge over the past four years, the team at JP Horizons has learned many things. Among the most interesting has been the feedback that comes to us from companies after completing weeks 32, 35 and 38. These are the weeks when participating organizations focus on the lesson plans titled "Working Smarter in My Position."

By this time in the program, participants have gained an understanding of effective ways to identify and drive out waste in processes, use the time they save to improve service and have dramatically improved communication and teamwork within their companies. So, what makes these particular Weeks 32, 35 and 38 significant?

These are the weeks when the focus moves from what the organization or its departments can do, and turns to what the *individual* can do to Work Smarter and make a difference. At this point, we turn from looking at what the team needs to improve upon and now prod

everyone to ask, "What could I improve upon?" It becomes an important transition point in the program, and looking at real feedback from participants during these weeks might give you, as a leader, some insights into human nature. After all, it's the very same human nature that you and I have, as well.

Consider the progress in thought in the span of these weeks, as individuals first had to learn to evaluate their own roles and how they affect others, then the change in attitudes as they actually began to find ways to improve — and ultimately how they become inspired to find more opportunities to Work Smarter in the things they do every day.

Week 32

- › "We struggled with this one."
- › "The group did not participate very well in the session this week."
- › "It was hard to find things in our individual areas to fix."
- › "Most people said they are already doing things pretty effectively in their areas."

Week 35

- › "Individuals came back with some great little improvements that they were able to make."
- › "The energy of the group was great as individuals began sharing their successes."
- › "There is a sense of friendly competition as people try to outdo each other."

Week 38

- › "This has become an everyday focus for individuals in the program."
- › "Our Working Smarter program has gone to another level."
- › "People are focusing on how they can control costs and drive revenue from every position in the organization."

Please understand that the examples above are certainly a generalization and sampling, yet there is a pattern that can be detected. One of the most difficult things to do is to stop and honestly evaluate the functions of our work. A company can make great strides in efficiency and Working Smarter as groups of people come together and improve processes. Those same companies can make tremendous changes and improvements, however, when individuals are able to personally apply the same principles and discipline to their work and find ways to drive out waste and add value to the tasks they tackle in their positions.

MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Help your team learn to individually contribute on a higher level to the success of your organization.

More than 250 Green Industry companies have participated in JP Horizons' Working Smarter Training Challenge (WSTC), typically saving tens of thousands of dollars annually. To learn whether your organization qualifies to participate in the WSTC, visit www.jp horizons.com/LM.htm today.