

SAME TRACK

THE CULTURAL NEWSLETTER FOR WABTEC EMPLOYEES

Competitive Edge

Rodrigo Soares breaks down the Star Points program in Fort Worth, and Bob Sonoff explains how the Erie facility used teamwork to address issues on Egypt locomotives.



Leader's Letter

Justin Downs discusses the power of teamwork and how we can support it with mutual respect and clear communication.



Managers' Roundtable

Managers across different Wabtec facilities discuss the importance of a teaming approach to overcome challenges and how it always comes back to mutual respect.



Frontline Spotlight

Rob Witherow and Ben Macosko discuss the benefits of teamwork and how it brings the best out of people with different experiences, perspectives, and strengths.



Picture This

Our new facility at Saltillo will expand our capabilities and add up to 150 new jobs and 130,000 square feet of space.



Teamwork in Action

Empowering employees to make decisions

Justin Downs discusses the power of teamwork and how we can support it with mutual respect and clear communication.



Team,

Collaboration and continuous improvement remain the keys to our success at Wabtec. Living up to these values requires a Global Operations culture rooted in flexibility and accountability, where high-performing teams are empowered to make decisions. When we confront production challenges, we rely on those employees closest to the issues to work together in identifying and implementing effective solutions.

In this edition of *Same Track*, the focus is on teamwork — where self-managed teams collaborate to drive improved safety, quality, and productivity. The Star Points program that we have in some locations is one example of how we organize teams consisting of different functions to address operational performance and make the critical decisions. With training that provides the technical skills, along with a front-row insight into plant operations, teamwork helps ensure the competitiveness and longevity of a facility.

While it requires bringing together the right skillsets, successful teamwork is where everyone treats each other with respect. Communication is crucial to demonstrating that. All of us have a responsibility to lead by positive example and model the behavior we want to see in our fellow team members. Like being courteous and respectful of others, it's often the little things that matter most.

There are many examples of teamwork and the positive results it has delivered in this edition of the newsletter. I hope they encourage you to learn more about our business goals and think about actions you can take in working with your teams that can help us continue to exceed our customers' expectations.

Thank you for all the work you do,

Justin Downs

TAKE THE SURVEY

We want to hear your thoughts on the *Same Track* newsletter, so we've created a survey for you to speak your mind. Follow the QR code to share your feedback.



Competitive Edge

Empowerment through teams

Leaders on the front line

Rodrigo Soares breaks down the Star Points program in Fort Worth, and Bob Sonoff explains how the Erie facility used teamwork to address issues on Egypt locomotives.



At our Fort Worth facility, we implement a teaming approach to ensure that employees on the floor are empowered and connected to the business strategy. Here, Rodrigo Soares, Continuous Improvement Leader, shares the thinking behind teaming and the Star Points program and how they enable teams to contribute more than the sum of their parts.

Teams that drive the business

The philosophy behind the teaming program makes sure that the employees who are involved in the final product get to take part in the decision-making process. "Teaming is a cultural strategy that we've implemented to bring employees, especially hourly employees, to the top of the pyramid where they have the power, control, and ownership of decisions," Rodrigo says. "They're a part of the solution from the beginning."

With a teaming strategy, the people who experience problems first-hand are involved

in resolving them — which means quicker resolutions. "The goal here is to create a fast and adaptable plant that is focused on our deliveries but based on the team," he says. "To accomplish that, we need to develop our team. We must educate them well, inspire their passion, and empower them with the right information to make the best business decisions to drive continuous improvement."

This brings opportunities for development and decision-making that may not be present with other cultures. "In a traditional organization, the mindset is for employees to do whatever their boss tells them to do," says Rodrigo. "There's a huge difference between empowering and delegating." Rodrigo and the Fort Worth facility are committed to equipping team members with the information and skills they need to take the lead. "We want to empower — that means training and educating team members so they can make the decisions for the company at the

point of implementation," he says. "An empowered team will understand the focus of the business and how their daily activities impact the company's goals, helping them become leaders of their own areas and actions."

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The teaming approach means that employees involved in the final product are taking part in the business strategy.

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Empowerment and connection

There are three types of teams within the teaming approach. Natural teams are permanent teams which integrate teaming and empowerment in daily operations while making our products. Ad-hoc teams are temporary teams that work together on a specific problem, such as a quality issue to determine the root cause and corrective action.

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There's a huge difference between empowering and delegating.

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The first two types of teams are typical within most facilities, but the third type, standing teams, are an important element of our Star Points program. These are permanent teams that meet to discuss recurrent business metrics like safety, quality, operations, HR, and materials.

Standing teams connect the goals of natural teams with the overarching strategies of the business. “Within each natural team, there are Champions within each of the standing Star Points teams to bring in the business metrics and represent their colleagues — and they also represent their natural teams in the Star Point meetings.” Star Point Champions use the meetings they have with both natural teams and standing teams to align daily activities with our strategies and spread valuable information across all the different teams.

Hands-on solutions

The Star Points program directly connects employees on the front line with high-level decisions for the facility. Rodrigo says, “The team is engaged and they know they're a part of the solution. They have a voice within the corporation to bring up specific concerns and improvements.”

The Fort Worth facility has seen leaders rise up through the empowerment they receive from Star Points. “We see this program developing people into strong leaders, because they get to be a part of high-level discussions about the strategy of the company and show up as representatives. It helps them grow a lot professionally,” Rodrigo says.

In fact, this program has been a pipeline to leadership in Fort Worth. “If you look at our plant support staff right now, more than 50% come from the shop floor and have grown in their careers.”

Following the stars

The Star Points program might not be available in every facility, but Rodrigo has advice for employees all across Wabtec on a teaming approach. “The first step is to have open conversations as a team about business topics and to open it up for different points of view,” he says. “It's important for people to feel comfortable with opportunities to talk about the business strategy and become part of the solution.”

Rodrigo sees ways that other facilities can also take a long-term approach to development and culture-building. “We take a continuous improvement approach to professional development. We don't expect new hires to immediately understand everything that's happening on the shop floor. We wouldn't expect them to live out the culture we want right away either,” he says. “When a new hire first joins, we teach them the characteristics we look for. But we'll also have additional trainings three months later, six months later, and look for individualized ways to raise the bar for that team member.”

Ultimately, implementing the teaming approach through the Star Points program is as good for business as it is for team members. Rodrigo says, “We believe that building this teaming culture is the most efficient way to meet our goals and strategy.”

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Teaming to overcome supply-chain challenges



In the Egypt locomotive build, the Erie plant received numerous defective parts from vendors and faced long wait times, some of which are still ongoing, for replacements. Bob Sonoff, Chief Union Steward, shares how the team stepped up to stay on track despite these challenges.

How did the team unite to address these issues?

“The biggest strength of our facility is the experience of our multi-generational workforce, who have experience with Egypt locomotives. In Erie, we have a lot of freedom to set things aside and keep working when problems do come up.”

What role did teamwork play in delivering for the customer?

“The team immediately pulled together when problems started. It's amazing to watch these locomotives being built, to see it come together, with all the processes they go through and the people who swing into action to accomplish the task. I have no doubts about this team being able to assemble on time.

“When it comes to crunch time, our experienced workforce steps up to do the best we can do to deliver an impressive result and rise to the challenge.”

Managers' Roundtable

Teaming with empowerment

Taking ownership on the front line

Managers across different Wabtec facilities discuss the importance of a teaming approach to overcome challenges and how it always comes back to mutual respect.



Why is a teaming approach important at Wabtec?

Luis: We have to understand that the level of the challenges for today's business is higher than ever, and the need for human relationships is more important these days. This gives us two great reasons for taking a teaming approach.

Kari: The important thing is getting input from the teams and then pushing to see what you can do to effectively help the team get to the level that they need to be at, or even push beyond that level and exceed what you're expected to deliver. You want to engage them enough to pull everybody in – essentially pushing them to achieve things that they didn't think they could.

Vivek: For perspective, in our facility, we are manufacturing a locomotive which involves more than 5,000 parts and an investment of 2,000 hours of work. It's not an easy feat to pull off. Therefore, since the inception of this plant, we have adopted a high-performance team approach to operations. In this, there are semi-autonomous teams who are aligned with a common purpose and there's a lot of collaboration and trust in the team.



Even though we are a global company, we have to act with a local team approach.

—Livio



Livio: Even though we are a global company, we have to act with a local team approach. We should respect the characteristics of the place where we are while aligning with our global values to reach the desired results in different ways.



What are the most important elements of successful teaming?

Luis: In any company we have different departments, but we need to have connection between all of them in order to reach our targets and goals for any company. We have to find the best way to work together without adversely affecting others. It may be hard at the beginning, but at the end I think we will feel mutual respect to support each other as the company grows.

Kari: For me, networking is by far the most important component. It's about creating those relationships that allow you to broaden your knowledge and your team base. You have to be courteous and professional from the beginning. It's all about pulling people together.

Vivek: The essential tenet of a successful teaming approach is that the employees are self-driven by the sense of ownership, and this is what we do in Wabtec Marhowrah. The managers perform the role of leader instead of supervisor. The leaders coach, train, support, and empower their team members — and the team members take the ownership of work.

Livio: The most important thing for a teaming approach is respecting everyone's opinion. The first step for employees is to speak what's on their minds – expressing their opinions to their leaders, but also respecting the opinion of others. Sometimes it's difficult for the people from



Luis Mata
Lean Leader
Apodaca, Mexico



Kari Izbicki
Materials Manager
Erie, Pennsylvania



Vivek Kaushal
Lead HR Manager
Marhowrah, India



Livio Fonseca
Manufacturing Manager
Contagem, Brazil

the front line to express their opinions with management or their peers. The main point is to respect everyone's opinion.

Q What does a successful teaming approach between managers and frontline employees look like?

Luis: We are people, and we have to think about maintaining good relationships, communication, and trust. When we achieve this, we are well prepared to face any challenge to reach our goals as a team.

Kari: I think managers should be able to support and promote their team. A successful manager will retain the

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A successful manager will retain the employees that want to work for them. —Kari
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employees that want to work for them because they enjoy what they do. Then, managers work to challenge their employees to continue their career and create a pipeline for the upper levels.

Vivek: We want frontline employees to be empowered to take responsibility for both doing and managing the work. When we talk about empowerment, it encompasses elements like authority, time, training, support, budget, information, and accountability. All these elements come together to convert the frontline employees into a high-performing team.

Livio: It's important for the people on the front line to have the freedom to speak and to be listened to by their leaders in management. If you have people from the front line, the manager, and the directors all on the same level, you create a space for successful collaboration and communication.



Check out the Managers' Roundtable video on the digital version of *Same Track*.

Frontline Spotlight

Teaming on the frontline

Collaborating for smarter solutions

Rob Witherow and Ben Macosko discuss the benefits of teamwork and how it brings the best out of people with different experiences, perspectives, and strengths.



Rob Witherow, Lead Materials and Execution Specialist in Erie, embraces a teaming approach and encourages other front-line employees to tackle problems with collaboration. Here, Rob and his manager, Ben Macosko, Operations Manager, share how they've used this approach to raise the bar in their facility.

More than the sum of their parts

Rob sees value in a team's ability to create effective solutions to existing and emerging problems. "I take a teaming approach to accomplish something greater than individuals could on their own – the outcome is still greater than all the inputs combined," he says, "At its core, it's about approaching a problem or project with multiple viewpoints." Rob creates a space for the team to balance different perspectives so that they can be synthesized into a better solution.

Ben sees Rob's collaborative spirit as a tool for innovation deeper than day-to-day issues. He says, "Rob has developed and proven his leadership skills by identifying multiple growth opportunities in revenue output within our organization."

Ben cited the continued evolution of battery operations as an important collaborative



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At its core, it's about approaching a problem or project with multiple viewpoints. – Rob

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process that Rob helped facilitate. "Rob has been fully engaged every step of the way and has helped to define multiple processes and aid in their implementation."

Recognizing individual strengths

One of the most important parts of collaboration is playing to everyone's strengths. Rob doesn't waste a second when learning about new members of his team. "I try to identify everyone's strengths within the first meeting. I'll have an understanding of the roles needed for a specific project, and based on each person's individual background and interests, I determine who would be best to work in those various roles."

Rob doesn't stop there; he also drives his teammates to grow and develop outside of their specific interests. "I want to give them opportunities to work on responsibilities that are not their strengths yet, so they can grow and widen their experience – to make them better employees for future team projects," he says.

Rob recognizes the importance of letting the team run without intervention. "I trust everyone with the responsibilities that are assigned and give every opportunity to let the team succeed on their own." He says, "But I give additional support to those working in an area that may not be their strength. And I openly ask for help from others when I might not have the knowledge or background to do the best I can."

Ben admires Rob's ability to inspire his team and to manage the ebbs and flows of production. "We have all seen and felt disruption to the supply chain, but the team's ability to pivot and execute at a moment's notice is integral to their success."

Teaming takes time – and good communication

Rob recommends patience when creating a team environment. "It might be a slower start at the beginning because you have multiple people with multiple experiences, but if done properly, the outcome of the project will always be bigger than all the individuals' work combined."

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Two-way communication defines a team. – Ben

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From a leadership standpoint, Ben finds collaborative growth comes from disciplined communication. "Rob demonstrates effective communication by outlining definitive goals to establish accountability across assembly teams in our shop." He says, "Two-way communication defines a team. If we can effectively communicate across all levels of operations, we can all strive for the same objectives."

Rob is far from finished strengthening his team, but his leadership on the frontline, facilitated by Ben, empowers his team to innovate. "You gain opportunities that you would never get by only having one or two people work together. It also exposes individuals to new ways of thinking while opening the door for insight into other people's values and cultures."

Picture This

New Saltillo facility

Growing our team

This month, we've expanded the Saltillo plant by opening a whole new building. This new facility will improve space and capacity, and expand our capabilities in Saltillo while helping us expand the catalogue company-wide. Michael Bratt, Vice President of Operations, unveiled a commemorative plaque at the opening.



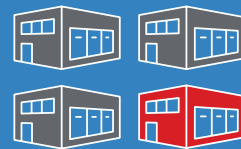
SALTILLO EXPANSION

RIBBON CUTTING



The Secretary of Economy, Claudio Bres, representing the Governor of the State, Miguel Riquelme, was present at the ribbon cutting, together with the mayor of Arteaga, Ramiro Durán. Plant Manager Eder Campos also thanked Justin Downs and the Wabtec global team, as well as his own team and union representatives.

With this new addition, we'll now have four buildings at the Saltillo facility. The new 130,000-square-foot facility means we'll be expanding from 110,000 square feet to 240,000 square feet.



The expansion of this facility will bring in 150+ new jobs, with 450 employees projected for Saltillo once the building is fully operational. Employees will be involved in metal fabrication, welding, and the painting process.