

SAME TRACK

THE CULTURAL NEWSLETTER FOR WABTEC EMPLOYEES

Frontline Spotlight

Jim Hibbler and Chris Curtis inspire their team to make continuous improvements as they build the NYCT and FLXDrive locomotives.



Leader's Letter

Justin Downs discusses how frontline employees can adopt a continuous improvement mindset that elevates safety, quality, and efficiency.



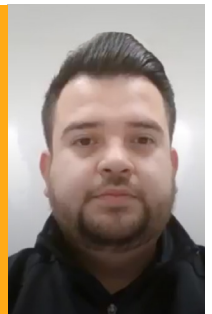
Competitive Edge

Bruna Pinho shares ways employees can create a continuous improvement culture for their teams.



Managers' Roundtable

Managers from around the world talk about how employees can create a continuous improvement culture.



Employee Excellence

The Plant Material Team in Bihar created a solution to reduce their excess and zero demand inventory, saving time and space.



Taking Responsibility for Improvement

Putting Lean principles in action

Justin Downs discusses how frontline employees can adopt a continuous improvement mindset that elevates safety, quality, and efficiency.



Team,

In all our facilities, we use Lean principles to improve our efficiency, safety, and quality, to ultimately deliver the best results for customers. The Lean principle of continuous improvement is what pushes us every day to restart the Lean process, and to strive for better results than we've produced in the past.

I'm impressed every day to see the ways different facilities make continuous improvement a priority, whether it's a Kaizen event or a small change someone makes to a process on a build. These changes add up, and Wabtec as a whole has grown and succeeded because of the small, persistent innovations at all different levels of the company.

I want to see our employees refuse to settle for the way things have been done up to this point. We've got a lot of talented, smart, innovative individuals throughout our business, and I know you're capable of finding ways for us to deliver our products to customers faster and with higher quality while improving safety as well.

Frontline employees have a crucial responsibility when it comes to continuous improvement. You're the ones most involved with our locomotives before they reach the customer, so you're especially familiar with the opportunities to reduce waste or make things better.

It's important to collaborate with one another — talk about the parts of your work processes that feel tedious or unnecessary, and think about what it could look like to change those. Speak with your managers and other leaders about what you're seeing on the floor, and where you see room for improvement. A change you make could make your fellow employees safer, and could improve products for our customers.

Thanks 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.



Frontline Spotlight

Improvement in Action

Lean improvements to new products

Jim Hibbler and Chris Curtis inspire their team to make continuous improvements as they build the NYCT and FLXDrive locomotives.



Jim Hibbler

When it comes to continuous improvement at Wabtec, frontline employees have some of the most significant opportunities to make a difference. Jim Hibbler, Production Technician and Chief Steward of Building 5 in Erie, and his manager, Chris Curtis, are taking advantage of these opportunities for improvement on their team as they work on the NYCT and FLXDrive builds.

Setting a strong example

Chris counts on Jim to drive the team forward, to recognize wasteful processes and improve them. “Jim is a great leader. He challenges the other hourly employees to learn the new processes and come up with solutions to the various problems we face,” he says.

Each day, Chris sees Jim leading the team to make themselves a little bit better than the day before. “As the Chief Steward for Building 5, Jim knows the pressures we are put under to continually grow and improve,” Chris says. “He and the other hourly employees have been great about coming up with ideas on how to make our various processes better.”

New and improving

The continuous improvement mindset has been especially impactful with the new product lines, New York City Transit (NYCT) and the FLXDrive locomotives.

“

It's critical for employees to get out of the 'this is how it's always been done,' mindset with the work we do. — Jim

”



Jim and other members of the Building 5 team

Building 5 is in its fourth round of production for NYCT, and the team has improved despite changes to the build assignment. Jim says, “With continuous improvement, we pushed to get the NYCT4 locomotive to our target by the end of 2023. We experienced many setbacks from materials and engineering changes, but we accomplished what we set out to do thanks to our culture.”

By giving everyone a chance to speak up and talk about improvements, they were able to significantly streamline the process and reach their target. Jim explains, “I try to make sure each employee is being heard and feels like they're contributing to the team. To succeed as a business, everyone needs to be on the same page and have great communication.”

And these improvements produced the results that Chris and other leaders in the facility were aiming for. “The whole team has been instrumental in helping shape the new building footprint for the new product innovation builds,” Chris says. “The hourly workers have all been engaged in developing this line. It's fun to watch and exciting to be a part of.”

Making a difference

According to Chris, continuous improvement is a necessity for Wabtec. “With the competitive nature of our business today, continuous improvement is critical for our success,” Chris says. “It helps us streamline processes and reduce waste. Without it, we would not be able to grow and adapt to meet the needs of our customers.”

Looking across the company, Jim thinks there's opportunity for employees in every role to impact results. “I encourage everyone to speak up if they see something that can be improved. You never know when you'll have the next great idea,” he says.

But he knows it can be tough to break the norm, especially when there's a standard work that's already been established. Still, Jim thinks it's important to keep our eyes open for ways we can improve things. He says, “It's critical for employees to get out of the 'this is how it's always been done,' mindset with the work we do. Change is constant, and we can enhance our efficiency when we're able to adapt.”

Competitive Edge

Building Better

Creating a continuous improvement culture

Bruna Pinho shares ways employees can create a continuous improvement culture for their teams.



Bruna Pinho

Continuous improvement can feel daunting when working on day-to-day responsibilities, but there are many actionable steps you can take to refocus your work towards continuous improvement. Here, Brunna Pinho, Lean Leader, discusses ways to implement a continuous improvement mindset.

Leadership

Bruna thinks continuous improvement always starts with team leaders. “Leaders have an essential role in our continuous improvement culture. If our leaders don’t create that culture for their team, employees may not feel comfortable stepping up.”

Bruna says leadership should make sure employees feel heard when speaking up about something that can be made more efficient. “There is no continuous improvement culture without strong leadership engaging the team with this

mindset.” Brunna says, “We need to create an environment where people will not be afraid and will be free to raise problems and issues.”

A teaming culture

Bruna says that continuous improvement is important because it not only creates better outcomes for Wabtec but also for employees. “Continuous improvement is essential for any team or organization as it leads to increased customer satisfaction.” Brunna says, “That’s not to mention that continuous improvement can make huge strides in team culture.”

Bruna thinks the key to continuous improvement is diligence. She says employees who reflect on their work and create roadmaps for dodging existing obstacles are already using continuous improvement. “It’s really about being present and learning from your failures.”

Bruna says, “Continuous improvement is about making today better than yesterday, every day, over and over again.”

Implementing Kaizen events

Kaizen events are one of Wabtec’s many programs that facilitate a continuous improvement culture. Brunna thinks Kaizen events make continuous improvement feel more actionable and thus easier to implement into team culture. “By taking one week for our Kaizen events focusing on solving real problems, we promote employee insight.” Brunna says, “We show employees that their ideas and improvements are valuable.”

Bruna says her favorite Kaizen event of 2023 was related to building a new shipping process. “We worked together to eliminate waste. In our solution, we created a new communication process between the working team and the shipping team.”



Kaizen event flow planning



Bruna says, “In the end, we were able to use what we learned at the Kaizen event to change our procedure in our regular work.”

Today, better than yesterday, every day

Continuous improvement has a close relationship with Lean principles. Brunna says its more than just a relationship though – she says Lean principles are tools used to support a continuous improvement culture. “Continuous improvement is the action of improving something every day, so Lean culture would be everyone doing that every day all the time.”

Brunna thinks Lean helps teams refocus their attention from the obstacle in front of them to what might be causing the obstacle. “When we talk about continuous improvement, we are not only talking about shop floor improvements. We are talking about taking a holistic view of our

situation and solving the problem at the start.” She says, “Lean is a continuous improvement culture applied everywhere, applied for everything.”

Getting it done

Brunna thinks employees at all levels can focus on continuous improvement. “Ask yourself questions. How can I do my job better? How can I increase the quality of what I’m doing?” Brunna thinks by answering these questions and sharing their thoughts with leaders, they can continue to make their teams more safe, efficient, and agile.

“ **Lean is a continuous improvement culture applied everywhere, applied for everything.** ”

“ **Leaders have an essential role in our continuous improvement culture.** ”



Team floor meeting

Managers' Roundtable

The Next Step

Striving for continuous improvement

Managers from around the world talk about how employees can create a continuous improvement culture.



Diego Martinez



Why is continuous improvement important?

Diego: Continuous improvement can lead to increased customer satisfaction and improve the quality and reliability of our products.

Sandra: Continuous improvement is a systematic approach to how to do things better, faster, with higher quality, and with lower costs. It's essential for individuals and organizations to stay competitive in this tough environment.

Renato: The importance of continuous improvement is directly related to the systematic evolution to a new, better place. Whether it's individually, where we become better people and professionals, or corporately, where we make our processes better and we deliver a better world for our customers, suppliers, investors, and the community.

Our vision is to revolutionize the way we move the world, and continuous improvement is a systematic and sustainable way to achieve this goal.



The importance of continuous improvement is directly related to the systematic evolution to a new, better place.

— Renato



How does CI lead to better outcomes for Wabtec as well as customers?

Diego: Small meaningful changes can create a huge impact over time. Continuous improvement positively impacts our reliability and quality. It also allows flexibility between us and the customer to further improve our product and our process.

Sandra: If we have a continuous improvement mindset, we will always be thinking about how to increase performance. This approach includes defining objectives, analyzing information, identifying gaps, and making changes. All of this leads to increased quality, customer satisfaction, and reduced costs.

Renato: The search for continuous improvement takes us on the path of reflection and raises daily questions about our processes. When we improve, in a sustainable and continuous way, we raise our delivery to a new level. When we change, Wabtec changes with us, so we can change the world.



Diego Martinez
Operations Coach
Final Test
Fort Worth, TX



Sandra Munive Gomez
Human Resources Director
Monterrey, Mexico



Renato Moreno
Senior Manufacturing
Manager
Contagem, Brazil



Continuous improvement positively impacts our reliability and quality.

— Diego





How can employees focus on CI in their day-to-day work?

Diego: By bringing up small changes, ideas, or concerns to their daily task, employees can improve our quality, productivity, and safety in the shop. It allows the team to be empowered to suggest improvements, which keeps them engaged.

Sandra: It's very important to ask questions like: Is this the right way to do



It's very important to ask questions like: Is this the right way to do this?

— Sandra



this? Is this the right approach to do my activities? Is there any other way I can do this? Asking questions about our work gives us different insights on how to do our jobs better.

Renato: It's important to understand that changes are not necessarily big movements with big impacts. Changes are like bricks that we stack day after day, one at a time, and thus build something new, solid, and sustainable. We need to be asking questions, in a healthy, genuine, and truthful way.



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

Sandra and colleague



TXL Final Commercial Test Team

Employee Excellence

Bring It On Small changes for big solutions

The Plant Material Team in Bihar created a solution to reduce their excess and zero demand inventory, saving time and space.



A Plant Material Team in Bihar found their excess and zero demand inventory (EZDI) was too high, so they formed a cross-functional team of technical advisors, leaders and managers to reduce it. Here, Manish Agarwal, Material Planning and Execution Manager, explains how the team created strategies to reduce lead times and optimize inventory between plants and other organizations.



Siddharth Gupta and Manish Agarwal

The challenge

“We had more demand in system than what is expected and required. These EZDI items are not a useful part of inventory and reducing this extra inventory will help the organization decrease time waste associated with the processing of excess inventory.”



The team

“Our team has strong chemistry and there is a good interpersonal atmosphere within the Materials team and the Fulfilment team. Our team has significantly improved in the past few years and will keep raising the bar higher in coming years.”



The solution

“We devised a plan to take a holistic look at our EZDI and make changes which will support our reduction goals. This includes reviewing items with the Fulfilment team on a daily basis to determine the critical parts for at least the next five locos. We are taking proactive actions on the critical items in collaboration with the Fulfilment team. We also started itemizing LOB reports to reduce the time for review of materials. Finally, we set aside time to review with suppliers.”

The results

“Thanks to the hard work of our team, our solutions have led to strong material availability and an 83% decrease in inventory with a 92% decrease in EZDI. There are always more improvements to be made, and we will continue to find ways to reduce our EZDI in the future.”