

THE CULTURAL NEWSLETTER FOR WABTEC EMPLOYEES

# SAME TRACK



EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE  
**Preparing for Success**

FRONTLINE SPOTLIGHT  
**On the Same Page**

COMPETITIVE EDGE  
**The Power of Listening**

MANAGERS' ROUNDTABLE  
**Two-Way Communication**

The Communication Issue  
Q1 2025



# On the Same Page

Evandro Messias and his managers discuss the ways they ensure efficient and thorough employee-leader communication.

Communication is a two-way street. Managers and employees have a unique relationship that requires both parties to communicate effectively with each other. Here Evandro Messias, Production Operations Leader in Contagem, and his managers, Nelios Dutra and Sarah Aguiar, both Manufacturing Supervisors, discuss the value of open and clear communication channels.

## Getting connected

For both Evandro and his managers, strong communication is a clear priority. “Putting it simply, good communication helps us make more effective decisions,” Evandro says. “And on the other hand, inefficient communication with the team can lead to a bad environment and a lot of rework.”

Evandro thinks it’s important for everyone — leaders and employees alike — to think about all the different ways they communicate on the floor. “All communication in the workplace is an exchange of information, even when it’s nonverbal,” he says. “So, build a relationship of trust, and be transparent. Listen actively to each other, and for leaders, work hard to understand your employees’ doubts, concerns, and suggestions.”

## Find balance

“Ensuring that all team members are aligned on goals, deadlines, and responsibilities is critical, but it’s not always easy,” Nelios Dutra says. “That starts with leaders. We need to have open channels of communication, collaborate with other leaders, and encourage the people on our teams to do the same.”

On Sarah and Nelios’ team, connecting with other leaders is a priority. “Effective communication between areas is really important,” says Sarah Aguiar, Manufacturing Supervisor. “It establishes open channels with other areas, helps us collaborate with other leaders, and share relevant information with each other.”

## Tying it together

Evandro’s team is most productive when everyone, both leaders and employees, knows that safe communication channels are available. Evandro recommends that leaders “Keep learning. Keep questioning. Learn to listen to your employees. This way you will promote a healthy environment and facilitate team communication.”

Nelios and Sarah echo that sentiment. They want all team members to know they can speak up and speak out. “I keep an open door and strive to be available and accessible to the team — encouraging informal conversations,” says Nelios. “If we give employees a place to speak their mind and discuss issues, our risk of mistakes and safety concerns diminishes greatly.”



**Evandro  
Messias**

Production  
Operations Leader



**Nelios  
Dutra**

Manufacturing  
Supervisor



**Sarah  
Aguiar**

Manufacturing  
Supervisor

“All communication in the workplace is an exchange of information, even when it’s nonverbal.”

— Evandro Messias

# The Power of Listening

John Singleton takes us through the changes he and his team have made in Erie to optimize communication and efficiency.



**John Singleton**

Vice President  
Operations Management

With market challenges in 2025, we expect operational efficiency to be more important than ever. Since moving to the Erie facility as site leader last year, John Singleton, Vice President, Operations Management, has made improvements to the site's operating rhythms by emphasizing collaboration and open communication across the site, and he shares his approach here.

## Introducing John

John worked with Wabtec in Grove City for over a decade before moving to Erie, but he's still come to Erie focused on listening first. "There's been a lot to learn coming into the locomotive world, but I'm really happy to be with the great people who work here," he says.

John came in with a few key objectives. "We're really just working on getting our costs under control and improving relationships across the board," he says. "And to do that, I try to spend time on the manufacturing floor, talking to the people who are actually doing the work and getting feedback directly from them on what they'd like to see change, and where they think we have opportunities to improve."

For John, it's clear that operators are the ones driving our key metrics, so they should know the targets they're chasing. "I think sometimes, leaders may hesitate to share all available information with their teams, but I think from my perspective, that's generally a mistake," he says. "We've been successful by pulling people into discussions more frequently."

In addition to informal communication, Erie's leadership has installed a few additional routine meetings to make sure the people on the floor are getting the information they need.

## Proof of concept

And the good news? Better communication has been driving great results. "One of the best examples is with our NS locomotives, where we had a 25% reduction in hours against our baseline, thanks to a lot of participation from the hourly workforce," John says. "Last year, we realized that the Erie workforce had more labor hours associated with that locomotive than the equivalent locomotive in Texas. So the team took on the challenge to try to reduce those hours. It was a pretty big challenge, but I'm very happy with what we've accomplished."

John continues, "I'm a big believer in arming people with the information about what they're trying to accomplish, and then people generally do a good job pitching in and providing ideas and suggestions to help you get there."



"I'm a big believer in arming people with the information about what they're trying to accomplish."

## Putting People First

These communication practices are improving efficiency, but they're also improving our most important metrics around safety. "One of the other things we tried to focus on last year was improving our concern reporting on EHS issues," John says. "We've done some things to help our people proactively identify risks, and we saw concern reports more than double in 2024, and I think we're on track for another significant improvement in 2025."

"We also had a great rate of participation in our safety survey," John says. "And one of the things we tried to do differently, in the same spirit of transparency, is post all of the comments and questions from the survey along with leader responses in each of our plants."

## New challenges for 2025

Moving forward, John's excited about what the team can achieve as we continue to bolster our collaboration with better communication. "Our cost competitiveness is one of the big challenges we have here at the Erie site. We're trying to make sure that our efficiency goals are clearly visible to our team members, and to make sure people feel like they have opportunities to bring up suggestions they have."

Ultimately, John thinks we can stay aligned most of the time, and everybody wins when that happens. "For most of our workforce, we all want the same things, right? We all want stable employment in Erie, we want the Erie site to be successful, and we want to make the best locomotives that we can for our customers, doing that in a cost-competitive, safe way with on-time delivery," he says.

John concludes, "If we recognize that we all have the same interests, it's pretty easy to work together."

## Measurable impact



### Concern reporting

When employees report safety concerns, we can address those concerns and prevent injuries. But if employees can't trust that their concerns will be investigated, they won't report them in the first place. By focusing on communication and trust, we've seen a significant year-over-year increase in concerns reported.

**254%**  
improvement  
YOY

**2023** → 657  
**2024** → 1,641



### Safety survey

We want to hear what employees have to say. With Erie's last safety survey in 2019, only 46% of employees participated. In 2024, 96% of employees shared their thoughts.

**208%**  
improvement vs.  
last survey

**2019** → 46%  
**2024** → 96%



### Cost control

As we've communicated at the Erie site about reining in costs, we've been able to work more efficiently. We brought our baseline hours for NS locos down by 25% with better attention to detail and efficiency.

**25%**  
cost  
reduction

**Baseline** → 2,703 Hrs  
**Reduced** → 684 Hrs

# Two-Way Communication

Managers around the globe share some of the ways they prioritize communication with their teams to meet their objectives.



**What are some ways you ensure clear and thoughtful communication on your team?**

**Michael:** In a leadership role, communication needs to be a two-way street — listening to team members is just as important as giving guidance and direction. It's so important to

listen and focus on understanding instead of just replying to what they're telling us. You've got to be empathetic, because the concerns they have are valid.

**Dina:** If communication happens on a regular basis, and it's transparent, employees will get to know their leaders and each other — they'll build trusting relationships. We also set boundaries so the employees can build support and trust.

**Mauricio:** Any time I can, I try to make communication face to face. People don't always get the same message when we say something over text or Teams or an email. I also like to paraphrase with people — I tell them what I think I heard and make sure I'm right, and if not, ask them to clarify so we can make sure we really have the same information, and the same understanding.



**Michael Knapp**

EHS/Maintenance Manager  
Albia, Iowa



**Dina Kurzhibayeva**

Passport Technician  
Astana, Kazakhstan



**Mauricio Oyervides**

Lean and New Projects Manager  
Arteaga, Mexico



**How can leaders make sure they're getting good feedback from their teams?**

**Michael:** As a leadership team, we should practice active listening. That means asking questions, providing feedback, and following up. We might be overwhelmed at times with the different things we have

going on, but every concern is important. That's also why we should provide feedback, and if we solve a problem or are putting actions in place to address a problem, we should communicate that back to the employee who brought it up so they know we take it seriously.

**Dina:** It's essential for leaders to show the importance and value of working effectively as a team. Think proactively about the purpose of the conversation you're having, rely on facts, evaluate the work, and find solutions that work for everyone.

**Mauricio:** What I always come back to is that the employees on the front line are the experts. So when we have a problem, we go and talk about what the solution is. If I bring an idea, I ask them if they think it will work, and encourage them to let me know if they see a problem. It's important to be transparent so they know they can do the same, and can tell me if they see a problem with the way I'm instructing them to do things.



**What are some of the ways you're continuing to improve communication on your team?**

**Michael:** There's always room for improvement. Every person communicates differently, and learning to judge your audience and communicate accordingly takes practice.

One phrase I come back to a lot is that every person says what they say for reasons that make sense to them at the time. So, if you're not understanding why someone is bringing something up, maybe you need to look deeper to understand that person's perspective.

**Dina:** It's really about building on what we're already doing. We're establishing good relationships; maintaining open, two-way communication; and listening to suggestions and opinions. It helps to establish a positive relationship among the employees with regular meetings and training, so they have a chance to get to know and understand each other.

**Mauricio:** One thing we're really working on as a team is checking in after any difficult project or assignment to ask what went well, what didn't go well, and what we should do differently next time. I also want them to be confident and not be afraid to say what they think is right. Many of us are afraid of being laughed at for having a silly idea, but these people are smart and have the knowledge, and we learn through mistakes, so I want them to speak up.



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

Powder and cable tray assembly team



# Preparing for Success

Employees in Marhowra leading the charge on the new customer order share how they're strengthening their collaboration to reach their safety, quality, and delivery goals.

## What are some of the things your team is doing to prepare for the new customer order?

**Shivam:** We're collaborating with the cross-functional teams: Product Development, Manufacturing Engineering, and Planning and Scheduling. Our first step is to map the customer schedule and drive the MRP.

**Jayant:** We're also identifying long lead-time parts and kicking off NPI activities with sourcing and Supplier Quality Engineering (SQE). We've prepared a PFEP sheet that maps milestones with engineering for the engineering bill of materials (EBOM), SQE for the production part approval process (PPAP), and sourcing for part development.

**Manish:** We've ramped up coordination with the Fulfillment, SISCO, and change control board teams to ensure delivery as per the point of fitment. Plus, we've got our budget planning for P&E lined up, and we're aligning our completion activities as per the project planner and gateway tracking in MS Project.

**Rohit:** We've also implemented stringent quality control measures to ensure every process meets the standards. Failure modes have been analyzed, SODs developed, PPAP launched, PFMEA, and control plans drafted. Abnormalities are being eradicated through MDR and PCR.

**Mijanur:** From an EHS perspective, we're assessing customer requirements, performing risk assessments, and ensuring a safe work environment that complies with regulatory requirements.

**Jay Prakash:** We as a team resolved many challenges, like the re-layout of the plant, track modifications, new equipment installation, tight deadlines, and long lead supply chain items. Ultimately this all played an important role in developing and refining the manufacturing process. Effective coordination among our various teams, regular meetings, and clear communication channels have played a crucial role in addressing these challenges.



**Shivam Soni**

Manufacturing Engineer and Configuration Control Manager



**Jayant Singh**

Fulfillment Manager



**Manish Agarwal**

Materials Planning and Execution Manager



**Rohit Kumar**

Quality Technical Specialist



**Mijanur Hassan, MD**

EHS Specialist



**Jay Prakash Gupta**

Manufacturing Engineer



## What kind of coordination does it take across different teams to be prepared for this order?

**Manish:** As a cross-functional team, we've coordinated all the activities. We've been organizing regular interdepartmental meetings to discuss progress and tasks. The Planning team is working closely with Design Engineering and the Configuration Control team to complete the EBOM and MBOM.

**Shivam:** Meanwhile, our Engineering and Design teams are collaborating on technical specifications and design elements. Compliance with customer requirements is a top priority for us. We also have weekly calls with global technology transfer assessors (TTAs) to discuss new processes and their availability at the JVC shop floor for our first locomotive build.

**Jayant:** On the supply chain side, Fulfillment, Sourcing, and SQE have been working with suppliers to secure necessary materials and manage logistics, ensuring there are no delays.

**Rohit:** Implementing designs and producing components while collaborating closely with Quality Control and EHS. Regular inspections and continuous feedback loops are helping us improve continuously.

**Jay Prakash:** Our team has organized Problem Counter Measure (PCM) meetings, planned materials, assessed P&E quality readiness, and overcome all the challenges in a systematic manner.

**Mijanur:** Making the right decisions at the right time with clear communication among key stakeholders. It's incredible how effective communication can drive success across different teams and sites.



## Why is this new customer order so significant?

**Jayant:** The new order represents a strategic expansion into the market. It opens opportunities for future business growth and long-term partnerships. The order features cutting-edge technology and innovative design solutions, positioning Wabtec as an industry leader. It showcases our commitment to advancing the field.

**Mijanur:** Executing the new project will enhance our production capacity and build trust with our customers. It will also provide professional development opportunities for our employees.

**Team:** We believe that a new project is always an opportunity to demonstrate our expertise across Wabtec sites. It's a testament to our commitment to deliver enhanced quality products through the systematic and efficient utilization of available resources. Our goal is to achieve 100% on-time delivery, ensuring that we meet our deadlines without compromising on quality or safety, with every team working cohesively to ensure customer satisfaction.

