

Forty Years.

Productivity Inc: It's the People



On October 23, 2008 Productivity Inc held an Open House in celebration their 40th Anniversary. All product categories were showcased, hundreds were in attendance.

It's a rare manufacturing shop in the Midwest who has not heard of Productivity Inc. Since 1968, Productivity Inc has been a catalyst for CNC advancements in the Upper Midwest machine tool industry with ties to local community and technical colleges and professional machine tool associations. The company is celebrating its fortieth year and Manufacturing Success asked employees why they believe Productivity Inc has been successful.

We gave several employees two questions: one regarding the company's success and one about their customer experiences. Considering the number of contacts we made we expected to find a broad array of comments. And while the company's vast products and services were mentioned many times, there was one comment that jumped off the page from ever single reply.

"It's the people..."

"I have to say the people..."

"Definitely the people..."

"Hands down the people..."

Well, "the people" have spoken and they are united in the belief that Productivity's success is due to the men and women who make up the Productivity team.

There are several employee testimonials, one in particular we have chosen to print almost word for word, including the questions we asked, because we believe it captures the essence of what all the others had to say.

These words are those of ten-year employee Teresa Barnes, Administrative Assistant Application Engineering, recently moved to the Automation Department.



**QUESTION 1:
From your unique perspective, why do you feel Productivity has been successful?**

Teresa writes, "Productivity is a company that looks to the past to help shape the future. If you talk with employees that have been here for at least 10 years, you will find they remember how things used to be including past processes and people. They are able to take what has worked in the past and improve on it. Productivity is open and responsive to new ideas from employees. The changes that have occurred through the years reflect input from employees. Examples of that would be the creation and growth of the MachinesUsed.com, Preventive Maintenance, and the Automation departments. While the sky is not the limit, Productivity Inc provides a work place with all the components an employee needs to exceed at their position. Each department interacts with other departments, and the combined efforts provide our customers with a complete package for their facility. In 2001, Productivity Inc took on the daunting task of becoming ISO 9001:2000 certified. It was a joint effort from all departments. We now have a quality system in place that guides us to improving the business."

**QUESTION 2:
Briefly describe your greatest customer experience.**

Teresa writes, "Any time I can help a customer find the right person or product, it is a great experience. Before working in the Automation Department, I worked in Application Engineering. It is a good feeling when you can hear the relief in a customer's voice that they have reached someone that can direct them to the solutions they seek. In Automation, we have a booklet of success stories that shows how the department has positively impacted the bottom line of our customers. We hear how we have exceeded their expectations whether it is in increasing the production of parts or even slowing the robot down because they can not keep up with it."

In summary Teresa wrote, "Productivity Inc must be doing something right as several employees that had left to pursue other job opportunities, have returned. People like to feel good about themselves and the job that they are doing. Productivity provides that atmosphere."

To close our *Inside Success* feature we had to highlight the most unique statement submitted by any employee. The quote comes from sixty-six year old, Terry Madden, an 11-year employee in Machine Packing/Unpacking. Terry said, "I often wish I was thirty again so I could stay around longer at such a great company. The management and people of Productivity are second to none and everyone is fully devoted to serving the customer either directly or indirectly." As testimonials go, you just cannot find more passion.



Mia Anderson, ten years, receptionist, says, "Despite continuous growth, Productivity remains a close knit family where each person is appreciated and respected. No matter what their position, we are all focused on finding better ways to service our customers."

Kathy Manemann, 30 years, Accounting Manager, "By trusting people to do the job you hire them to do, you build self-confidence and pride which results in everyone giving a little extra everyday. My friends are envious of having a work environment like I have here at Productivity Inc."

Debby Lewis, 18 years, Customer Support Supervisor Tooling & Accessories, "The management team invests in this company, providing the best for customers and employees. The building remodel is an example of this. Not only do the employees get a beautiful building to work in, but the new facility allows us to serve our customers better. We have better training facilities, more showroom space and larger inventory space to stock more products."

Steve Schuck, six years, Shipping/Receiving Coordinator, "I believe that it is when a company hits an uncontrollable snag that the word "team" is truly tested. Take for example, a vendor sends a wrong part or is late with a part, you do not see the typical finger pointing instead everyone pulls together to create a "Plan B," so the customer sees minimal, if any, delays. The absolute dedication to the customer's success is always at the top of the list."

John Holm, 16 years, Tooling & Accessories Department, "Treating employees with respect, provides a great work environment (professional yet relaxed & fun). This atmosphere translates to the customer as everyone works together to make sure each customer is taken care of and is happy with their purchase. Productivity is not interested in the "quick sale." They are about building long-term relationships."

Dave Brockopp, 12 years, Automation Engineer, "The success of Productivity Inc, in my opinion, has a lot to do with great leadership; people who have great vision and understand that commitment to our customers is key. Productivity Inc really does believe that people make the difference, and places high value on the employees here everyday making sure our customers receive the highest level of service."

To learn more about the products and services offered by Productivity Inc go to www.productivity.com.