



Update on Operator Excellence Vision

In his video The Power of Vision, Joel Baker makes the following comment:

Vision without Action is merely a Dream

Action without Vision just passes the Time

Vision with Action can change the World

As discussed in our last E-Tech dated 11 November 2011, we have realised the most successful sites progressing their Improvement journey have developed and clearly articulated 3 further Visions to complement their Company / Site Vision:

1. **Improvement Vision** – what do we want to achieve from our improvement journey and when do we want to achieve this? (this was covered in our last E-Tech dated 11 November 2011)
2. **Operator Excellence Vision** – what do we want our operators to be able to do or what standard of operator do we need and by when to achieve our Improvement Vision? (to be covered in today's E-Tech)
3. **Operations Vision** – how do we want to operate our plant and when do we want to achieve this? (this will be covered in our next E-Tech dated 9 December 2011)

Creating an Operator Excellence Vision

What do we want our operators to be able to do or what standard of operator do we need and by when to achieve our Improvement Vision?

When researching this concept we came across some Managers and Supervisors who described the way their operators operated their plants by using the language:

They operate the plant by Magic, Art or Science

Using this analogy, we have attempted to understand what is meant by these terms. Our findings were:

Magic

We employee operators, train them on how all the buttons & knobs work using Standard Operating Procedures and Checklists, and provide examples (standards) of expected performance. Often the performance is average and quite variable.

Art

After many years of experience (provided we don't move them all over the place) our operators develop the understanding of relationships between problem and required action (when this happens, if I do this, I should solve the problem). Performance improves with less variability.

Science

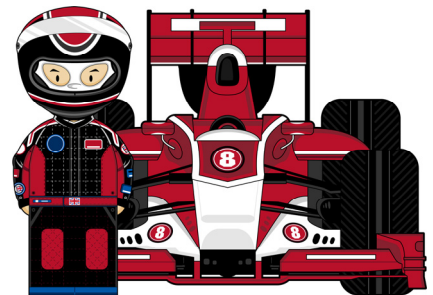
Through regular weekly improvement activities our operators learn how to care for their equipment and most importantly how it functions (as opposed to just operate) so they can diagnose problems at the earliest possible time to root cause. In parallel through Frontline Problem Solving they develop a greater understanding of the process they are responsible for, so again they can identify problems at the earliest possible time when they are easy to fix. Performance continuously improves with little variation.

Key Learning from this Analogy

It appears Operators don't want to be referred to as aspiring Scientists with comments like "I would have gone to school longer if I wanted to be a scientist".

Hence we realised we needed a better analogy that defines what Operator Excellence is.

The best analogy we have found so far is a Formula 1 driver. They understand the functioning of their equipment (as well as being excellent operators) and diagnose problems on the run relying on a highly skilled and motivated support crew to create a winning team.



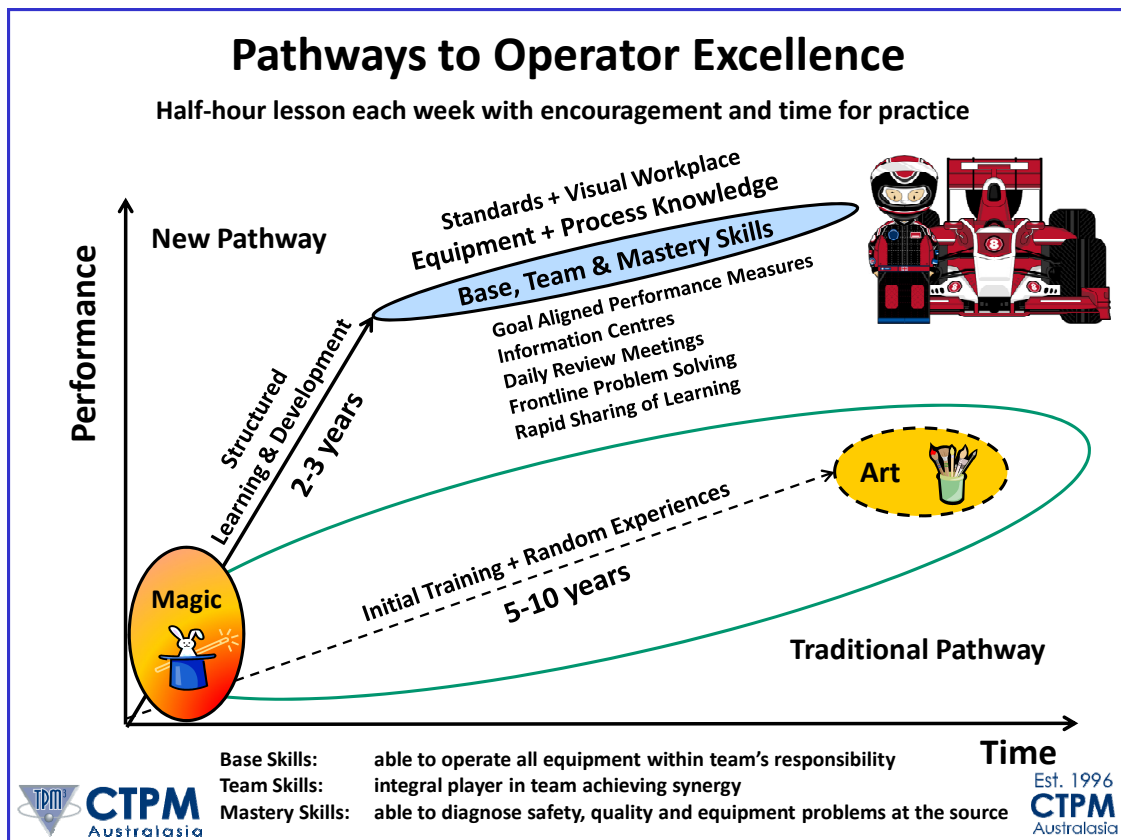
There is a great short video on YouTube called [BBC Sport - Formula 1 Pit Stop Special 'Driver'](#).

The video highlights the importance of communication between the driver (Operator) and the pit crew (Maintenance). It also highlights how the driver is able to diagnose problems with his car (machine) on the run and advise the pit crew (maintenance) to allow them to get ready for a speedy repair. There is also good examples of how (even with all their technology) they rely on the use of Visual Controls to assist the Pit Stop process.

One of our mining clients has embraced this pit stop concept with the refuelling of their dump trucks in the pit. During the refuelling, the time is also used to carry out a checklist of visual inspections and cleaning of the truck (especially underneath areas prone to rock damage) looking for equipment defects. The driver, instead of staying inside the cabin, also gets involved with their 'pit stop' crew. The impact of this activity has been very impressive with significant cost saving reported due to finding defects before they became big problems.



Below is a slide we have created which shows the traditional pathway for the development of Operators along with the new pathway we have developed which many of our clients are now following.



For more information about CTPM's learnings regarding the need for an Operator Excellence Vision please do not hesitate to contact your CTPM Navigator or CTPM Head Office on +61 2 4226 6184 or email to ctpm@ctpm.org.au.