

# Brief

*Stamping Ideas Into Reality*

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## Cause and Effect

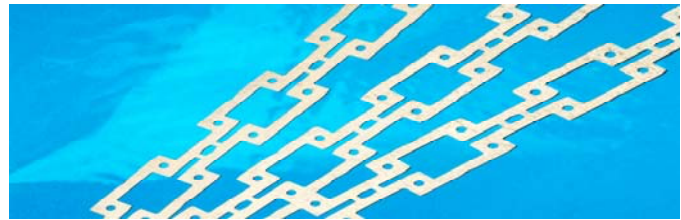
**Beneath every problem is a cause for that** problem. Dave Hoover, Manufacturing Vice President at Die-Tech, looks for the root cause when he encounters a problem. "In order to solve a problem we must identify the cause of the problem and take steps to eliminate the cause. If we merely address the symptoms, the problem will continue to exist."

Prior to 2006, the scrap rate in the plant was 0.75%. This was unacceptable to the management and Hoover was determined to reduce it.

Hoover believes that people working together in teams can accomplish more than people working as isolated individuals. However, he says that getting everyone to buy-in to the process of root cause and corrective action can be difficult. "People need tools to help them identify a quality problem and take corrective action." And he admits, "It's also creating a cultural change. Everyone must understand the value of doing this."

Hoover began his quest to reduce the volume of scrap by forming a corrective action team, which included a process engineer and maintenance technicians. "We asked many questions as to why this was happening and used various quality management tools to sort through the various causes," said Hoover.

Hoover offered an example of how his corrective action team successfully worked together. One reoccurring problem that caused scrap was a curvature in the manufacture of continuous strip products. The team



began its work by documenting everything that could be a possible cause for the curvature, using a Cause and Effect Diagram (CED) to capture the information. "We ended up with more than fifty different possible causes," acknowledged Hoover.

The group tested and evaluated several dies. They learned that worn tools and over-adjustment of those tools caused the curvature problems. "We had no history of how long a tool could be run before it was worn out. Now, we created a procedure to check these tools and replace them when they reached a pre-determined maximum amount of wear and we documented these findings in the preventive maintenance schedules."

Hoover is proud of the accomplishments of the corrective action teams. Scrap in the plant has been reduced to 0.26%. "We're running less scrap so it takes less time to do product runs and less cost to manufacture products. And, he adds, "these improvements go to our customers' bottom line."

Is your current stamping partner getting to the root cause of your problems? Perhaps it is time to affect a change -- give Die-Tech a call to explore the possibilities.

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