

Personnel at the Inspection Table

Fast and Slowly Working Personnel at the Inspection Table and in other Essential Production Areas of an Industrial Potato Peeling Factory

Predisposition / temperament of the personnel – “Counting machines” – “Individual and Group Piece-work” – Personal Assessment – Reward

Neither by reward nor by encouraging words is it, in the long run, possible to persuade “less temperamental” personnel to work faster.

On the other hand, there are fast working personnel unable to work slowly at all.

Fastness must, of course, be coupled with carefulness. Fast labour who make a lot of mistakes can be expensive labour.

If we proceed on the assumption that a fast and carefully working labour costs an amount of 100 percent, it is intelligible that unfit labour might rapidly cost twice or three times as much or even more...!

This is unacceptable for the cost calculation of an enterprise.

But how to find fast and careful labour?

In former times we used to install counting machines on inspection tables...

At the office of the boss one could read on a display how many potatoes were inspected by each labour... The result after some weeks was that the counting device was done away with, on the grounds that it appeared to be impossible to make slow personnel faster by its application. Besides, there was the risk that the “slow personnel” would have a tendency to become faster by a more careless way of working.

This would be tantamount to a deterioration in quality...!

The factory owner who had invested money in the counting machines, came to the conclusion that it would be better to watch the personnel attentively. Later he had only best personnel at his inspection table.

While one can speak, when applying counting machines, of “individual piece-work” (payment for each individual labour according to his performance in terms of kg / h), the introduction of “group piece-work” (payment for a whole group of inspection labour according to their performance in terms of kg / h), appears to be equally inexpedient: In case of “group piece work”, the faster labour feel placed at a disadvantage as against the more slowly working, which causes discord in the factory...! – Moreover, group

piece-work, too, leads the labour into careless working, which results in quality losses! – Besides, a fair payment of the group is difficult, due to the almost daily changing quality of raw goods. A worse quality of raw goods means less money for the group, because the inspection of the peeled goods will take considerably more time. However, one cannot blame the inspection personnel for the purchase of bad raw goods!

The only possibility to achieve a good and profitable result is to watch the individual workers attentively, in order to be able to assess their performance. Only the most efficient personnel who also make a point of delivering a good quality, can be kept, in the long run, at an inspection table or at a similar crucial place in the factory.

In order to keep the efficiency of the good personnel alert and to sharpen their consciousness of quality, the factory owner should, for example, fix weekly / monthly and in a more symbolic way “performance markers” for the group on a table put up in the production room in a conspicuous place... The fixing of such “performance markers” or “performance data” do not have any direct financial consequences. One can, for instance, think of free tickets for popular events or functions, of season tickets for swimming baths etc.

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