This is part two of the foreman’s responsibilities for getting organized on the job site. Last month we covered results expected on the job site as well as the Seven Step Planning Process. This article will cover installation of effective job controls and other important elements of organizing.

It is important that the foreman understands the scope of work, contractual obligations, quality specifications (how to read blueprints), how to do all the required paperwork (for example, time sheets, labor tracking and reporting, submittals, addenda, extra work authorization), and the customer’s expectations.

And the foreman should attend pre-job planning-meetings and post-job reviews, conduct a three- to five-minute “daily huddle” with his crew, reviewing safety standards and goals for the day and getting the crew’s input, and complete a daily jobsite log.

Other important elements of organizing include the following:

- Getting everyone on the same page. There should be unity of purpose between the project manager, superintendent and foreman in the following areas: (1) Clearly identify everyone’s role. (2) Review expected results with everyone. (3) Ask, How much authority does the foreman have to make decisions? Where do people go for support? (4) Define key skill requirements.
- Identify the chain of command.
- If you need someone with a specialized skill down the line, identify it and request it as soon as possible.
- Utilize crew leaders on large jobs. One person can supervise eight to 10 people effectively.
- Use the teamwork concept—“We need each other.”
- Make sure you have all the information and resources you need to effectively do your job.
- Control the project and lead your crew.

The foreman must also implement key job controls as the job progresses. This is a way for him to systematically maintain control and optimize productivity and profitability on the job site.

- Daily five-minute huddle with the crew.
- Weekly safety toolbox talks.
- Tracking and reporting production by various job codes.
- Ongoing safety inspections.
- Tagging defective equipment.
- Daily completion of the jobsite log.
- Weekly planning sheet.
- Processing extra work orders.

The foreman should be asking these questions every day:

- Have I forecasted my tool, equipment and material needs for next week?
- Am I familiar with the specific jobsite safety requirements?
- Do I know how to handle requests for extra work?
- Am I maintaining an inventory of the tools, equipment and material that are on the job site?
- Have I communicated to the crew how much work they need to get done every day and the quality that is expected?
- Are there any barriers to the crew’s productivity that need to be dealt with?
- Do I have all the information I need to be effective on the job?
- Do I get the support I need from the office?
- Am I having any problems with the general contractor’s general superintendent?
- Do I know how to complete the required paperwork?

Keep in mind that people thrive and do well in an organized climate. They want what they need when they need it so that they can be effective and efficient—which is how most people desire to operate.

About the Author
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