A relatively small job of short duration does not require a complicated production schedule. On a one- or two-man job, it should be relatively easy for the foreman to communicate what he expects from his mechanics, and then follow up to see that the work is done on time in a quality way.

On large jobs, the main consideration is that the foreman gives his crew proper information and sets a realistic production goal with them. The foreman must communicate the importance of production goals in achieving the overall schedule for the job. He must let his crew know that by achieving the goals, they become key players in the construction process. The goals help create personal ownership for each crew member’s contribution to the success of the job.

Once the goals are set, the foreman must follow up and check on how the crew is progressing. If the crew member is on target, provide positive reinforcement. If he is not making progress toward the goal, then he must intervene and find out why. Then it is the foreman’s job to provide coaching to eliminate any barriers preventing the crew member from reaching the goal. The foreman should be honest with his people. He should let them know where they stand. If they cannot reach their goal after repeated coaching, then he must let the crew member know that he cannot keep him on the job if improvement does not occur.

**Monitoring Production—Job Cost Management**

Your district uses some form of production reporting by activity (for example, framing, hanging, finishing by areas in the building). Typically, these reports identify the amount of work that has to be done by activity, the estimated man-days for that activity, the estimated production and a place to record actual production.

It is the foreman’s responsibility to monitor the production by cost codes on a daily basis and record actual production. If the foreman determines he is having difficulty meeting the specified productions, he should contact his superintendent and ask for help identifying the problem and establishing a game plan to get back on track.

**Paying Attention to Ongoing Activities**

As the job progresses, there are key activities that the foreman must pay attention to in order to achieve optimum productivity on the job site. Since the basic resources of manpower, material, equipment and time must be provided to the foreman as the job progresses, it is important for the foreman to carry out the following responsibilities:

**Scheduling and Crew Size.** It’s important for the foreman to determine his average crew size. He should review his production report to get the total man-day count for each trade, and then look at the general contractor’s schedule that shows the total number of working days for each function.

For example, let’s say there are 20 man-days budgeted for framing, and the general contractor’s schedule shows a total of five working days to perform the task. The size of your crew is determined as follows:

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\frac{20 \text{ man-days}}{5 \text{ working days}} = 4 \text{ man crew for the 5 days}
\]

Knowing this, there are several things the foreman should then do. We’ll talk about those things next month.

**About the Author**

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