

'ANGUS BARKS'

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AEG Executive Board

Crystal Ball

Preliminary 2009 work forecasts for Plants I & II show some areas are going up and some going down. Overall manpower will increase in Plant I, and looks to be flat in Plant II.

That's positive news for our members with short seniority. As you can tell from television news and Internet blogs, many people claim to have an economic crystal ball, but no one really does. To avoid the fear factor that rumors create, you're better off sticking with the facts as we know them.

The Union will work hard in the next month to get those facts in front of you. Next week at the plant-wide Job Preservation meeting, each manager will give a work and manpower forecast for their buildings. In the second week of December, the stewards in Plants I & II will meet with the LMO Manager to discuss each of their areas. By mid-December we should have a clear picture of 2009.

FOUNDATION

The global economic downturn will impact many workers in many countries. Why would GE workers building jet engines have a more positive outlook than autoworkers, bank workers, or construction workers? First- because the aircraft business has 10 years of future orders in place. Many emerging economies around the world will be buying planes in the next decade. Second- because GE will need every profit dollar from its manufacturing operations to bail out its financial operations at GE Capital.

SOLUTION

The US economy is in trouble because Congress allowed corporations to move too much of our manufacturing base overseas. You are a manufacturing worker, and the work you do is part of the solution. GE's stock price is in trouble because the Company became too reliant on quick money from financial services. You make money the old-fashioned way--you earn it. GE will need you next year.

EXPECTATION

Two things you can expect in 2009: The Union will strongly support efforts by management to farm-in work. Plans are underway on some specific drawing numbers. Success in this area is the key to employment stability in the Riverworks next year.

Work flow next year will be much like it is this quarter. Sometimes spotty, with inventory tightly controlled and overtime below the levels experienced in past years. All-in-all, we have a path forward thru a deteriorating world economy.

Quality Alert

This year stewards from different areas expressed the same concern that basic quality procedures are headed downhill. At this point, the Union believes management would be wise to give every new hire coming in the plant an introductory quality program. Simple *dos & don'ts* with routing sheets, job procedures and vouchering.

Back in the days when quality had their own management separate from production, employees received quality messages as strong as the productivity message. Today DLP dominates the cell-leader's daily message.

To all our members with one month to 40 years service, the Union has a message: If you stop a job due to a legitimate quality concern, the Union can always defend you. Our members do not suffer discipline for taking a stand for quality. On the other hand, plenty of our members have been disciplined for ignoring their quality responsibilities.

If you have a *wink & nod* relationship with your cell-leader, you are hurting the Union's effort to keep work in this plant. That means, if you believe your cell-leader wants you to look the other way on quality, and in return you believe you'll be favored with overtime you want, then you have *sold your soul for fool's gold*. When the part you fail to call out returns from the engine house, or the field, or the crash site, it will have your name on it. And your cell-leader who is winking and nodding and smiling at you today will be long gone. The overtime money in your pocket, after you have let down your Union, the customer, your government, the flying public, and the armed services, will not buy you any excuses. Think about it, and have the courage to do the right thing.

