



AMEDENVER2015

SHARE • LEARN • GROW

APRIL 27-28

**ACHIEVING PEAK PERFORMANCE**



# “People Are Not Afraid of Change, They Are Afraid of Uncertainty”

Mick Wilz

Sur-Seal

Director of Enterprise Excellence

“The Building Blocks of Manufacturing Excellence”

[Start with Video](#)



## Some info about who Sur-Seal.

We are experts in sealing materials and applications, and provide design, manufacturing and supply chain management to leading OEMs around the world.

We serve four Markets:

- HVAC
- Lighting
- Medical
- Industrial

We are on a Journey to make our facility World Class. This is guided by the values of the organization and built on a foundation of trust.

**Customer Care – Better Together – Growth – Innovation – Respect and Appreciation**





## Mick Wilz, Sur-Seal

- I am the Co-owner and Chairman of the Board of Advisors .
- I took over production in 1993. I can remember the day my father started the business in 1965. 50 years ago.
- In 2012 we received the AME award for manufacturing excellence.
- *AME and Mark Preston played a key role in this.*
- On January 31st 2012 the New York Times told our story in the business section. The story was about my ability to solve problems and make knowledge visual and accessible to everyone.
- I am now president for AME Great Lakes Region. Indiana, Ohio and Michigan .
- I also have a program that I teach around the country. The title is  
“ Building an Engaged Team Takes Team Work”





## Jobs

The New York Times

### PREOCCUPATIONS

MICK WILZ

*Don't Just  
Talk About  
Change.  
Show It.*



TERRY DUFFY  
Mick Wilz, owner of Sur-Seal, a family-owned business in Cincinnati, used a Lego display to show workers what a redesign of the factory floor would entail.

front of the layout, and because of the proposed changes they bought into it. They ended up with a design that also became what's on the wall. We have posted instructions on the machine, and it makes. Safety is a top priority, too.

For everyone, but especially for workers like me, I'm still not a good reader. When I've had to read work instructions — say, if someone has a question about them — I've told the person I might need a little time. Or, if I've been given something to read in a meeting, I've gone into the hallway and followed the text with my finger.

I became more interested in reading in the early '80s, after USA Today was born. It offered many color photographs, which got my attention, and I started reading the captions. The pictures were worth a thousand words to me, and the captions completed the story.

The iPad has changed my life. Ten years ago, I read very little. But with the iPad, I'm listening to an audiobook a week. When I need to write something, I use apps like Dragon Dictation and Speak It. I dictate what I want to write, then play it back and write from that. It's easier than sitting down and trying to write in the moment. Spell-check has

been a godsend.

In October, Sur-Seal won an award from the Association for Manufacturing Excellence, in part because of the Lego project. It was a personal achievement, but it also sends a message to anyone who might be struggling because they're different: not only can they measure up in the workplace, but they can exceed expectations. After seeing our display, some vendors and suppliers have told us they're using Legos at their companies. That's very rewarding.

**B**ECAUSE I had a difficult time when I was young, I believe in treating others as I would like to have been treated. If I go to an off-site leadership seminar, I design posters with motivational messages from the meeting, add clip art and display them on the walls to share what I've learned. I've had employees tell me — even those no longer working for us — that I'm the most inspirational boss they've ever had. That's nice to hear.

I give employees second chances because I know what it's like to struggle. Years ago, I gave one of our maintenance workers two or three chances to improve his work habits, and he succeeded. Now he's head of maintenance and a leader in our manufacturing initiatives. We also hire a lot of high school graduates who aren't inclined to try college because they feel that it would be too difficult. You have to find a seat on the bus for everyone. I'm a perfect example. □

and I own the company. I'm now 56, and I have thrived here. I'm able to be creative in my own way.

I started working in building maintenance and rose to head of operations in the 1990s. In 2006, my brother Jim, our C.E.O., suggested that my title be changed to director of enterprise excellence, which reflects our efforts to operate at peak efficiency.

In 2009, as part of a strategic plan, we decided to change our factory layout, which involved moving around our work groups. Rather than simply tell our employees about the plan, I decided to show them. I brought in my children's Lego blocks and figures and arranged them into a model of our current factory floor. I even matched each Lego figure to a worker. Then I started to change the arrangement to simulate the new design.

The process had striking results. As

As told to Patricia R. Olsen.

# PLANT ENGINEERING

# Sur-Seal®



Global Automation & Manufacturing Summit  
September 10, 2014, Chicago

## The heart of engagement

Sur-Seal rebuilt its culture, one Lego block at a time

...of course, is that Sur-Seal makes seals, which are designed to provide a seal between two objects to make everything flow

now provides life coaches as well as help. It was not about making more gaskets or seals or expanding the business, although things have happened in the dozen years things changed.

"Working on employee engagement is over the edge," Wilz said. "When you sit

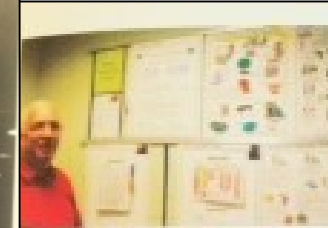


Figure 1: Sur-Seal is a family-owned business, but it focuses on employee engagement. In 2009, when Mick Wilz stepped up to the top job, he implemented the principles of his new culture for the entire business. All images courtesy of Sur-Seal.

There's a Lego woman standing by another worker. In 2009, Legos marked the path for what the company is today. Main Street, which is where product is fed along the production process. Initially, employees questioned the sanity of bringing these building blocks into a manufacturing plant. They started playing with the blocks, moving them around to other their own ideas on how the plant's operating process might be optimized. And thus, a new engagement.

Building a chain. The idea is to build a chain in the palm of his hand.

...the assembled together the taken of the chain under a form a straight

...but one link of the with on a foundation organization and

...apis now run the keep the chain a little out of and straightened its jumped up again straight. "apis straight."

...what we have is place to handle it. "Everybody's drama in place to

...one devoted to roles. Richweiler, Sur-Seal. "There are

Figure 2: Wilz is the primary Lego manufacturing site at Sur-Seal. Quality is the mission.

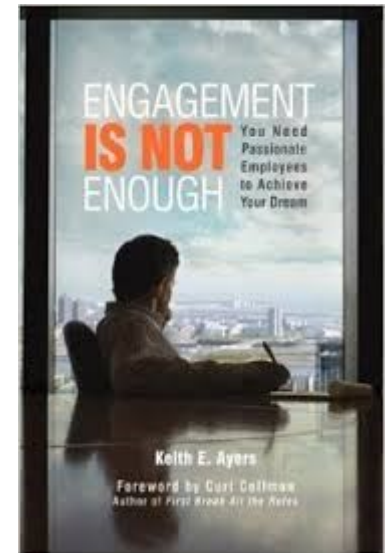


Figure 3: Sustainability efforts beyond the four walls of the plant. Sur-Seal is a family-owned business, but it focuses on employee engagement. In 2009, when Mick Wilz stepped up to the top job, he implemented the principles of his new culture for the entire business. All images courtesy of Sur-Seal.



## Some info about who Mick is. Growing up facing adversity

- As a child I grew up with Dyslexia.
- I took over production in 1993.
- At that point Lean was driven by one of our top customers.
- The way lean was implemented at Sur-Seal in the 1990,s was my way or the highway.
- 10 years later I looked over my shoulders and I had no one following me.
- I needed to reinvent myself, I was living 2 different lives.
- This phase took over 4 years before I could talk about it in public.
- Then in our strategy event held in 2008 I was challenged to build an engaged team an make Sur-Seal a world class facility.
- We started with a book club. [Watch Respect Video.](#)
- You need to know yourself, before you can guide others.







Basic strategy includes these three key components:

By Mark Daly

C = Customer Intimacy

I = Innovation

O = Operational Excellence

Make everyone feel like an insider.

**Sur-Seal®**

2008 Focus

Current Focus

O

C

C

I

I

O



Employee engagement needs to come from the heart.....

## Lessons Learned

- In lean I follow the 3 ps. Product, Process and People. In the 1990s I was missing the people part of it.
- Now the people part is my main focus.
- You need to find a seat on the bus for everyone.
- Engagement needs to come from the Heart.
- With this in-line everyone else takes care of the product & process.
- “People are not afraid of change, they are afraid of uncertainty.”
- As a leader you need to remove the uncertainty.
- One of the many tools that I used was a lego model of our plant.







## Sur-Seal®



We needed to change from a Job Shop to Cellular Manufacturing.

The bottom layer is the Current State.

The top layer is the Future State



**Sur-Seal®**



**Text: 513.295.4820**



# Sur-Seal®

## Guiding Principles for Leadership to live by

*Is your team playing the same music in harmony together?*

### **1 of 3 People**

Be competent in self-awareness

Lead by example

Align everything to the vision, mission and values

Build everything on a foundation of trust

Always remember why you are in business

Hire hard, lead easy Ginger Hardage

Lead people, manage processes

Create a culture where it is ok to be different

Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work. Aristotle

Respect and appreciation

Master the skill of listening

Be accountable

Teach what right looks like

Remove uncertainty

Listen to your inside voice, it is usually right

Network, surround yourself with great people

Communicate clearly

Educate yourself, be a lifelong learner

Make work meaningful

Celebrate



Note: These are my collection of inspiring words that I have collected over my years of travel. I would love to give credit for these but I am not sure of the origin, as I find the author I will add them. Mick Wilz- Sur-Seal 8/2014

# Text: 513.295.4820





## Guiding Principles for Leadership to live by

*Is your team playing the same music in harmony together?*

### **2 of 3 Process**

- Safety comes first
- Teamwork is a must
- Gather input from all stakeholders
- Include sustainability in the plan
- Keep it simple
- Lead people, manage processes
- Commit to continuous improvement
- Eliminate waste, a person is never waste
- Change from a push to a pull system
- Build a visual workplace
- Build quality into all processes
- Capture tribal knowledge
- Looking for waste needs to become a habit
- Eliminate all silos
- Facilitate change
- Measure progress
- Truly understand flow process flow
- Cross training is a win, win
- Train, Mentor and Coach
- Understand true cost
- End the blame game



Note: These are my collection of inspiring words that I have collected over my years of travel. I would love to give credit for these but I am not sure of the origin, as I find the author I will add them. Mick Wilz- Sur-Seal 8/2014

**Text: 513.295.4820**





## Guiding Principles for Leadership to live by

*Is your team playing the same music in harmony together?*

### 3 of 3 Product

Coherent vision, strategy, plan and metrics

There is a way to do everything better, find it. (Thomas Edison)

Develop long term relationships built on trust

Strive to understand what is really needed

Listen to the voice of the customer

Seek excellence, create value for the customer

Involve suppliers early on

Understand the true cost

Test fast, fail fast, adjust fast John Powell

Be a leader in the industry not a follower

Pick two for the customer, they cannot have all three

Quick Delivery   High Quality   Low Price   Edward Deming

Meet their delivery requirements

You cannot be everything to everybody

Don't be afraid to say no

End low bid contracts. Edward Deming

Simulation and rapid prototyping

Build quality and process into the product

Cross-functional product development teams

Exceed their expectations

Strive to make the customer brag about you. Edward Deming

Develop product that is harder to copy



Note: These are my collection of inspiring words that I have collected over my years of travel. I would love to give credit for these but I am not sure of the origin, as I find the author I will add them. Mick Wilz- Sur-Seal 8/2014

**Text: 513.295.4820**



## In-Line With Values of the Organization

- Mission and Values of the Family
- Mission and Values of the organization
- Link everything to the Strategy
- Safety needs to be first
- How to keep it sustainable
- Find a link on the chain for every person
- Find a link on the chain for every process
- Find a link on the chain for all products
- Don't be afraid to say no
- Lead people manage processes
- Commit to continuous improvement
- Keep your chain straight
- Don't push or pull it



# Keep Your Chain Straight

Foundation Of Trust with Commitment from Leadership



## Sur-Seal®



Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something - your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

(Steve Jobs)

izquotes.com

## Dancing Guy Video



**Sur-Seal®**

# Q & A Session





# **Thank You!**

**VS-5 Presentation:**

**People are not afraid of  
change, they are afraid of  
uncertainty Sur-Seal**