



**HOW COLLABORATION YIELDS  
SUPERIOR FACILITY DESIGN:  
OPTIMIZING PLANNING, PROCUREMENT  
AND IMPLEMENTATION MANAGEMENT**

**Q&A WITH ST. ONGE**



*Ahead of the **American Manufacturing Summit 2019**, Generis Group spoke with **St. Onge** to discuss their Lunch & Learn topic, **How Collaboration Yields Superior Facility Design: Optimizing Planning, Procurement and Implementation Management**. In this Q&A, we discuss the greatest challenges with national, domestic and international manufacturing operations, what manufacturers should stop doing to improve their performance plans, and what today's manufacturing leaders need to think about in order to plan for tomorrow.*

**Your Lunch & Learn topic at the American Manufacturing Summit will focus on how collaboration yields superior facility design, as well as how manufacturers can optimize planning, procurement and implementation management. What is one key takeaway you want to leave attendees with?**

Management needs to have the wisdom to avoid relying solely on internal resources for facility design. Fresh outside eyes challenge the norm and drive organizations to optimize the overall design leading to a best-in-class facility.

Sure, this is an added cost in the short term but the benefits from improving flow, reducing labor, and optimizing utilization of space reap benefits annually to offset that cost.

**What makes St. Onge unique, or why do companies choose to work with St. Onge?**

Our staff is highly experienced, data and fact driven, practical yet innovative, fiscally responsible, analytical, and unbiased in our approach and solutions. We will find the best solution for you, the client -- not them, the vendors or supply base.

Over 70% of our sales come from repeat clients or repeat executives/managers who have relocated to other companies. That is a solid track record which supports our double digit annual growth.

**What do today's manufacturing leaders need to think about to plan for tomorrow?**

I believe a huge challenge lying ahead of the manufacturing world is the availability, quality and skills of the future workforce -- both blue and white collar.

Companies need to engage with colleges and technical schools to develop the technical and engineering talent needed to support the operations.

**What is the greatest piece of advice you would give to manufacturing professionals to make their operations more efficient and effective?**

Take a breath, step back, and walk the process often. So much waste lies right in front of us that unless we slow down and look, we walk past it each and every day.

Question the norm. Why is that there? Why do we do it like that? Do we need that?

## **What is the greatest challenge with national, domestic and international manufacturing operations?**

The greatest challenge for the national and domestic market is manufacturing products at a cost point that consumers are willing to pay. Today's consumer is shrewd, researches products and costs, leverages the internet, demands a product now, and demands it at the lowest price. That doesn't align with raising minimum wage, optimizing inventory, and maintaining privacy, for starters.

The greatest challenge with international operations is maneuvering the political landscape regarding tariffs and keeping costs in that market approved sweet spot. The political climate regarding tariffs will force companies to re-assess whether to continue manufacturing overseas and ship or on-shore and shorten lead time to market.

## **What should manufacturing professionals stop doing so that they can improve their performance plans?**

Stop developing more metrics and running to a set of numbers. This leads to analysis paralysis and taking your eyes off of the process itself and making it better. Walk the process. Challenge the status quo. Engage the employee. Improve the process and let the results speak for themselves.

## **What steps should companies take in order to ensure that the right management practices and behaviors are implemented within their organization?**

The KISS principle still holds true today. Sometimes organizations try to do so much that they get lost in activities which, in most cases, are clashing or working against metrics and goals. Understand what you do, document it, review it, challenge it, improve it, and monitor it. Keep meetings focused, with distinct goals, actionable items, and completion of tasks. No one ever ate an elephant in one bite. The problems are many and some are large. Reduce the elephant to a series of workable tasks and execute.

To learn more about St. Onge's attendance at the American Manufacturing Summit, visit the [event website](#) or [view the program](#).

