

Global Production Update – Jeff Mulder, CEO
Thursday, April 23, 2020
Zeeland, Michigan USA

Subject: Manufacturing Needs Your Help

Hello, it's Jeff again. We had some cool stories for this week's edition of Notes from the CEO: We had a customer profile; a 2-Second Lean video from one of our co-workers in China; we even had a little write up on why Larry and Karen were sitting on an elephant in a picture on our Glass History Wall. Those stories will have to wait—today you're just stuck with me.

I'm actually embarking on a new adventure tomorrow (today is Wednesday, April 22). And I'm a little nervous about tomorrow, but I'll get to that in a few minutes. As I think about what I'm going to be doing tomorrow, I can't help but ponder, what would I have been doing on April 23 if COVID 19 had never existed.

(Jeff at the beach) I looked at a map yesterday and if COVID 19 had not existed, I would be somewhere about 200 miles south of Bermuda. My wife and I were supposed to be on a 2 week cruise across the ocean, and I'd be looking out at the Atlantic Ocean. Well, this isn't exactly the Atlantic Ocean—it's Lake Michigan. And instead of 70 or 80 degrees Fahrenheit and sweat, I've got 40 degrees F and sleet. Not quite the April 23 that I was expecting. I feel a little sad about that, but probably not a whole lot different than the things that you feel sad that you've missed because of COVID 19. And some of you, way more important things than a vacation—weddings, birthdays, maybe even a funeral, or the prom, or graduation. But there's nothing we can do about the stuff that we missed. We can, however, influence the future. So tomorrow instead of wearing sunglasses, a bathing suit and flip flops, I'll be wearing...

(Jeff at home in a face mask) ...this. This is what I'm going to be wearing tomorrow instead of a bathing suit. No these aren't the clothes I wear around the house to talk on the phone and do video-conferencing—I do that in my pajamas! These are the clothes I need to wear in order to work in the plant. And that's the adventure I'm going on tomorrow—myself and few other office people. Some people have already been out there, but Dave and I along with a few other office people have volunteered to work out in the plant. So why are we doing that for the next week or so? Here are a few numbers for you:

300,000 – the number of units our customers have on order with us right now.

250,000 – the number of units that are already late.

3,000 – And with the volunteers we have—which is really cool for those of you who have already volunteered—we can only make 3,000 units per day between VDO and Zeeland.

To give you another statistic—just yesterday we shipped 30% of our budget and we took in orders for 60% of our budget. So we're behind, and we're getting further and further behind. So we've asked for volunteers from the office to help supplement things.

As you've heard in past videos and other communications, we have the safety equipment. I have checked and we have the raw materials. And I just told you we have the orders. Here's what we really need, though...

We need YOU!

We don't actually need me (Jeff). But what we need to catch up on those 250,000 units that we're late on is you.

(Jeff back in his home office) So one of the jobs of a leader is to paint a picture of reality. And I've given you a little picture of reality and what's happening with our order intake and production. I have a few more nuggets of reality that I need to share with you:

COVID 19 is not going away anytime in the near future. I don't know when it's going to go away, but I can't imagine that it's not going to affect all of our lives for the balance of 2020.

Personal Protective Equipment, particularly at ODL, is not going away any time in the near future either. We're going to continue, even after the stay at home orders are relaxed or changed or eliminated, to utilize PPE and the procedures that we've put in place into the foreseeable future. And by the way, if you haven't seen it, Oscar has done another video on what those protective measures and safety procedures are, so we've included a link to that in this blog.

We have customers that are waiting for us right now—they're not going to wait forever.

We're not going to continue to pay people to stay home for very much longer.

And I have one more to share with you, while it isn't lighter (easier), you have more control over it: Your Job in the Future Depends on YOU!

I fully believe that your job depends on you, and you have control over that future more so now than you've had maybe ever, or at least in a long time. You see, the customers that we have that send us orders—for every unit that you make, we are filling an order, and we can send it to that customer, and that customer will most likely give us another order if we can get it to them soon.

We can't control what happens in the restaurant industry, or what happens with retail shops. We can't magically put toilet paper back on the shelves. But we can make door glass, and right now people want door glass. And if we can supply that to our industry, then we don't guarantee, but we make ourselves more valuable to our customers and that where Your Job in the Future Depends on YOU right now. And who knows, if we're good and a little bit lucky, maybe the housing industry will lead all of our countries' out of this recession—it has many times in the past.

(Jeff at his front door) So that's a wrap on Notes from the CEO for this week. I realize this was a tougher message than most, but that's part of a leader's job, to paint that picture of reality. I must say, I'm looking forward to lighter times, more fun videos, and maybe even a time when I can get back on that boat and go see the Azores across the ocean. But for now I'm getting ready to go work in the plant for a week or so. Why don't you come join me? At the very least, you can see how incompetent I am at doing your job!