

# This Was No Pipe Dream



It is always easier to work with human beings than with pipes and machines. It's natural to reach to the bottom of a problem by having a conversation. Machines don't talk, and so they bury their secrets. The easiest solution when faced with a challenge thrown by a machine is, often, to replace it. To discard and start again.

But the human spirit is bigger than that. And Mr. M.M Tiwari, of UltraTech Cement is a man of spirit. A man who loves his machines. He reminisces about the olden days when he would get more chances to spend time in the company of the nuts, bolts and pipes.

In 2006, Tiwari took charge of the UltraTechplant at Gujarat Cement works. A plant where machines weren't being

understood like they should be. Creating a dip in productivity and efficiency of the plant and its people. He knew that the problem needed immediate attention and a solution that was rooted in its cause.

Tiwari, a man of passion, saw clearly that the team operating the plant had become dismayed with the ongoing hurdles. They were in need of motivation and were skeptical of a new leader. Words alone would not suffice; the team needed inspiration through action and results. He was ready to face the challenge, both of man and machine, with commitment and passion. It was unacceptable to have the plant break down so frequently.

Inspired by his infectious spirit, the team was soon filled with a new sense of pride and responsibility. They rolled up their sleeves and started solving the smaller issues. Their morale was bolstered as they saw the change that they'd been hoping for. But the bigger problem was yet to be diagnosed. The annual shutdown gave the team the perfect opportunity to explore and amend. As Tiwari saw the plant sitting there, lifeless, he was once again mesmerized by its intricate yet powerful ways.

With hours spent investigating the maze of machinery, the team felt victory was theirs. But not long after the plant roared back to life, it once again came to a standstill. There was still something amiss.

Undeterred, Tiwari took some tools and went down to face the pipes once again. All rank or authority forgotten in that moment. As he scrutinized the kiln, he saw the problem staring

at him. He realized that there was a leakage in the coal firing underground pipe, hindering the flow of coal. His eyes lit up.

A speedy temporary adjustment was made and things began to fall in place. The team took charge and decided to erect a permanent overhead pipe to eliminate the issue forever. Their leader wasn't ready to leave them alone at it. He himself stayed there for 3 straight nights supervising and ensuring a smooth resolution.

The problem is often in the unknown. Today, the team, when faced with a problem, looks at it like a challenge that they must overcome. The machines are now loved and the human spirit, under its leader and his legacy, soars.