

PMPA Listserve Forums: Ideas At Work, Ideas That Work

by Miles Free, Director of Technology Services

I can remember the very moment I started thinking like an adult. I was a college student on spring break in March, hiking near Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania. I was wearing thin, suede leather boots on snowshoes. I had set out, *alone*, without a good map — only a quick glimpse of an aerial photo of the area — and darkness was setting in.

As I struggled up yet another rugged, snow-covered mountain, I figured that it would be at least 4 or 5 days before my parents would file the missing person's report and my body would be recovered. I had to go on, but in that cold, dark, frigid Pennsylvania wilderness, there was no place to turn for help. I had to solve the problem myself.

Have you ever had one of those days at work where, you too, feel the chill when you face some problem or question whose answer seems to lie unseen, out of your grasp? A day when you are convinced that you are ill-equipped, in the wrong place, and have nowhere to turn for the assistance you so desperately need? Do you wonder how many days it will be until the bankers and the auctioneer come out to recover what they can?

The PMPA Member Listserves

The PMPA Member Listserves provide just the kind of assistance that can save your day when you find yourself face to face with one of those apparently unsolvable problems. You can banish the vision of failure when you harness the collective wisdom and experience of the precision machined products industry by posting your query on the appropriate Member Listserve.

PMPA Listserves are topical: Manufacturing and Technical Listserve for manufacturing, material and process queries; Quality Listserve for quality assurance, quality control and quality systems and management issues; Corporate Listserve for topics of general management and business interest; and Human



Resources Listserve for questions dealing with employment issues, safety and health and training.

PMPA Listserves are an important benefit of membership in the PMPA, the premier provider of association services to the precision machining industry.

The Listserve In Action

Recently, a member posted a question regarding problems achieving a 120 surface finish on an 8620 part the company manufactures using a reamer. Having tried various operating parameters, the shop was unable to get a satisfactory finish in its process.

Unlike me on my spring break hike into frozen adulthood, the member sought outside help by posting a request for assistance on the PMPA Manufacturing Listserve. The 11:04 a.m. query appeared as an e-mail on the computers of the more than 500 list subscribers.

At 11:47 a.m., Pete Stechow of Contour Tool responded by posting comments regarding the amount of stock left for the reamer, spiral flutes and right-hand cut/left-hand spiral geometry. He also posted suggestions on the oil, tool material and tool coatings that could improve performance.

At the same time, Ellsworth Philbin of Index-Werke GMBH & Company KG gave advice on coatings on the reamer and left-hand spiral geometry. He added comments on floating the reamer and possible issues with the reamer's grinds and geometry.

At 11:54 a.m., I posted information regarding the sulfur content of the 8620 material being machined. I asked some follow-up questions to assist in troubleshooting. The questions were asked to determine if the issue was the built-up edge on the tool. I also added suggestions regarding coolant, coolant delivery and reamer geometry.

At 11:57 a.m., Dick Chamberlain of Len Industries explained his prior success using Barber-Coleman Reamers.

At 12:04 p.m., John Detterbeck of Lester G. Detterbeck Company posted his advice regarding the feed-in and withdrawal cycle on the tool and how it could affect surface finish.

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Listserve Forums continued

At 4:48 p.m., Rudi Muller, also of Index-Werke, posted a follow-up with contact information for Barber-Coleman Reamers.

Problem Solved

Happy ending? Just as the much colder, but much wiser college student found his way out of his frigid troubles, the company posting

the request for information found assistance on the PMPA Manufacturing and Technical Listserve.

At 5:58 p.m. the same day, the original inquirer posted, "Thank you to all for your help. We have different tooling on order to see if we can get improvements."

By making available the collective knowledge and experience of the

membership of the PMPA, the Listserves stand ready for that moment when you too, get that sinking feeling in your stomach.

The PMPA Listserves can help you find your way when you encounter a seemingly unsolvable problem. Help is just a simple posting away—a wonderful benefit of PMPA membership when you need it most.