

Operations Manager – Job Preview

Introduction

*This is a Realistic Job Preview of Trench Safety's position of Operations Manager. This instrument is meant to provide you — and only you — a chance to explore the job requirements and see how you would fit into them. **This is not a test.** The answers you provide here will be **seen only by you**, and will not determine whether or not we offer you this position.*

It is also important to you and to us at TrenchSafety that you make the best decision for yourself. You and TrenchSafety will be best served when you do. By reading this information, then answering the questions at the end, you will be able to determine whether this position is appropriate for you.

So, answer the questions honestly and candidly. After you've finished, read over your answers and take time to think about them. If you use this tool correctly, it will help you make your job decision and carry you on to a productive career.

A Typical Day in the Life of an Operations Manager at Trench Safety

NOTE: While this is a fictional account, the story provides a realistic look at what you can expect in this position.

Mark Brown was a very successful Operations Manager at TrenchSafety and Supply, Inc.

He had always had an interest in construction. Mark's father worked for a construction equipment distributor, and Mark enjoyed hearing him tell stories over the dinner table about helping contractors.

During the summers when he was growing up, Mark worked in construction. After graduation from the local junior college, he worked as an estimator for a mechanical contractor, but he never felt that he found his true home.

He was intrigued with TrenchSafety when he stumbled on the company's web site late one night. He saw there was an opening for an Operations Manager, and he did a fair amount of research into the industry and the company before he applied for the job. Following the interview process, he was offered the position.

As usual, Mark was busy all day long in handling a lot of different things.

He arrived at the office a few minutes after 7:00 AM. Officially, the office didn't open until 7:30, but he wanted a few extra minutes to prepare for the day. He reviewed three reports, reviewed his calendar, answered a couple of customer e-mails, and wrote out his "to do" list for the day. And though creating this list every day was extremely helpful to Mark, he also knew that flexibility

was equally important. Just yesterday he received an unexpected telephone call in the middle of the morning from a customer who needed a quote in 15 minutes for a bid the customer was putting together. Without hesitating, Mark got the prices the customer needed and passed them along to him. Then it was back to his planned list.

At 7:30, Mark met with the Drivers and Field Service Representatives, and discussed the day's activities. He liked these meetings and understood their importance. The meetings provided a great opportunity to plan for the day, to discuss any problems, and to do some training. He was responsible for the Drivers and Field Service Reps, and he always looked for opportunities to help them develop their skills and abilities.

About 8:00 AM, things got busy. He fielded half a dozen telephone calls, then waited on two walk-in customers. Mark took pride in the fact that he could stay "on top" of a number of different things at once. He also paid a lot of attention to the details, because he realized that failure to do so could be costly.

By mid-morning, things had slowed a bit, so he worked on a bid for a local utility that was being handled by one of TrenchSafety's salesmen. To insure pin-point accuracy in one crucial part of the bid, he checked some equipment specifications on a manufacturer's web site. He also took the time necessary to make certain that the bid was clear and neat, and looked polished and professional. Mark was very comfortable with computers. He knew they were a great tool to help him

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do his job well. Even before he began working at TrenchSafety, he had become proficient with MSWord and Excel. And he had also quickly learned TrenchSafety’s computer system, and frequently used the internet to search for needed information.

By late morning, everyone was busy, so Mark helped unload the truck of a contractor who was returning some rental equipment. He got a little dirty, but that was OK, he said to himself. It was part of the job.

Around noon, Mark grabbed a bite to eat in TrenchSafety’s classroom. Shortly after lunch, one of the field salesmen called needing some help with a shoring system for a challenging excavation. Mark always enjoyed these challenges, because they tested his resourcefulness.

Mid-afternoon, Mark met with the Regional Manager from one of TrenchSafety’s larger suppliers. He always asked a lot of questions in these situations because he wanted to learn as much as he could from the experts. Then, he waited on a couple more customers, asking them questions, as well. That always helped him identify their needs so that he could find the best possible solutions for them.

Late in the afternoon, the pace again slowed. He distributed information about a new product to the salesmen, and reviewed an inventory report. (One of his responsibilities was to continually make inventory recommendations to the Branch Manager.) He also checked the amount of training materials on-hand, to see if any items needed to be ordered for an upcoming “Competent Person” safety training class. He also checked DataFax and Dodge on the internet, looking for good leads for the sales team.

As the day was drawing to a close, Mark checked in by telephone with his boss, the Branch Manager (who had been in the field all day talking with various customers on their job sites). Mark updated him on the significant things that had happened this day. Mark had learned a long time ago that ongoing internal communications is a key ingredient in every successful business he had worked for.

Key Points Why Mark Was So Successful

- Mark realized that satisfied, happy customers are the key to TrenchSafety’s — and his — success. He knew that customers like that keep coming back, and they tell other people about their wonderful TrenchSafety experiences. TrenchSafety’s Branch Manager, Mark’s his boss, once said, “That Mark is really good. He genuinely cares about people, and he has a ‘Whatever It Takes’ philosophy toward his job. He answers the customers’ questions. He solves their problems. In short, he makes it happen.”
- He asked a lot of good questions.
- He was organized, and took pride in his work.
- He worked extremely well with the other TrenchSafety team members.
- He was eager to learn.
- He was persistent and resourceful. He liked solving problems.
- He was out-going. He liked talking with people.
- He was comfortable with computers.
- He worked hard and was focused.
- He enjoyed the busy pace and the ever-changing challenges. He once remarked, “There’s never a dull moment around here!”
- He paid attention to the details.
- He had a sense of urgency, especially when helping customers.
- He understood TrenchSafety’s products and their applications.
- Had fun at his job — and it showed!

Before he left, Mark did a quick walk-through of the facility, making certain that all inventory was put away, and the facility looked “First Class” for tomorrow morning.

Over the years, Mark had developed an uncanny ability to create “TrenchSafety Moments” — defined as going “above and beyond” to help customers, to solve problems, and to find ways to be more efficient in his daily tasks. He had learned first-hand a valuable truth:

His ultimate success was directly connected to his ability to add value — for his customers and for TrenchSafety.

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