Customer Highlight
Pioneering the Modern Day Furniture Industry
The story of Daniel's Amish Collection

By **Danielle Scott,** *Sales/Customer Service Department*

Take a moment to think about the intricate details of every step of a business. It is safe to say that any business can be described as organized chaos even when everything is "running smoothly." The smallest little hiccup can have a rippling effect that can either end like a tsunami or hopefully more like a drop of rain in a pond. How does Daniel's Amish Collection try to organize their chaos and maintain a strong growing company? It all starts with the founding owner, Daniel Yoder, whom according to his son, Duane, is described as "simply a pioneer". Through encouraging that creative and innovative type of mindset into his everyday operations, the company has flourished.

Starting off as a stone mason in 1994, Daniel's family was faced with serious medical challenges with his youngest son. These circumstances forced him to take a different career path to provide for his family and adapt to the demanding medical schedule. He began carving small wooden Amish horse and buggies

"Success doesn't come and find you, you have to go out and find it."

"Bob Mapes"
President and CEO

"The secret of success is to do the common thing uncommonly well."

John D. Rockefeller Jr.

Daniel's Amish Collection features a modern and efficient production facility.

in his barn by hand and selling them for a dollar a piece. Daniel made twenty thousand buggies in the first year. As Daniel's son made an astonishing recovery from his illness, Daniel began to broaden his woodworking skills building curio cabinets and later expanding to custom bedroom and dining room furniture.

As the business was officially established in 1998, it is now operating from two manufacturing locations in Killbuck and Mt Eaton, OH. Awarded as one of the fastest growing companies in Northeast Ohio in 2014 and 2015, the company was built from humble beginnings while maintaining a strong sense of humility. Daniel's set themselves apart from the competition through a wide variety of options in each of their furniture collections.

The company attributes its success to their focus on building quality furniture and the ability to deliver exceptional service to their 100+ customer base.

Daniel's demonstrates quality through a lifetime warranty on their drawer boxes. In fact, "Our drawer boxes can hold the weight of a pony." The company also takes pride in their employees, emphasizing the importance of giving credit where it belongs as quality starts with solid employees. In fact, the company states they feel like they have one of the best workforces in the area.

In 2007, Daniel partnered with Chris Karman of Hudson, Ohio, a vital asset in implementing more modern equipment to accommodate their growing customer base. Looking to the future, as the departments work together to construct the furniture pieces, Daniel's is always researching for improved efficiency. The team designed their own automatic

One of the hand-carved buggies that Daniel produced.

Precise Amish craftsmanship is guaranteed in every piece of furniture.

cart track system to transfer furniture through the finishing stages of production. As current production averages seven days from start to finish, the company's desires have been established to improve efficiencies, integrate lean manufacturing with a Just-In-Time Inventory with a long-term vision to have all operations at one location.

Daniel and Chris are both very active in the company, with Daniel traveling all over the United States visiting customers and putting his "pioneer skills" to use, and Chris focusing on the financials. It is common knowledge that a smart business is one that is always willing to change and be innovative. As a leader in the furniture industry, it is evident that Daniel's Amish Collection is conquering that and showcasing the craftsmanship of American Made wood furniture.

In house finishing ensures quality control through every stage of production.

Grooming for the NEXT Generation: Millennials
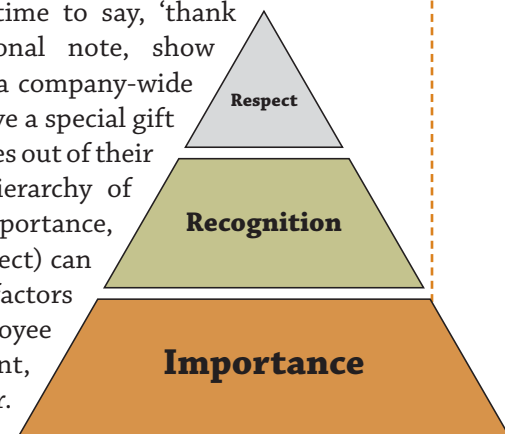
By **Dennis Hange,** *Marketing Manager*

Millennials, Young Adults, Generation Xer's. Parents of Millennials can't seem to kick them out of the house soon enough and managers see them as lazy and entitled. According to US Census, the current genre reports, "Today's young adults look different from previous generations in almost every regard: how much education they have, their work experience, when they start a family, and even who they live with while growing up."[1]. If you're a human resource manager, supervisor, or owner it's important to understand the next generation as by 2025, a full 75 percent[2] of U.S. workforce will be millennials.

5 Simple Steps You Can Implement Right Now into Your Business

1. Take time to recognize your Employees and their strengths

From an early age, Millennials have learned that receiving praise and recognition helps them to feel valued. As this generation has moved into a career, they have taken the same mentality and philosophy as a representation of their personality. Executives are working more hours and employees have expressed their opinion on the amount of recognition they receive. According to a research poll by Tiny Pulse 79% of all employees[3] are feeling undervalued due largely to a lack of recognition and appreciation.

As a leader, take time to say, 'thank you', write a personal note, show recognition through a company-wide announcement, or give a special gift when an employee goes out of their way. The Maslow Hierarchy of Needs of Esteem (importance, recognition, and respect) can all be contributing factors to boosting employee morale, engagement, and reducing turnover.

2. Create Employee Appreciation Days

Observation of Millennials for any period of time will show they are constantly connected. Despite this, Millennials do seek time to unplug from technology or as some would call a Facebook or phone sabbatical. Planning an event for your team can be as simple as a small luncheon with a food truck or a company-wide event with an invitation to invite their families. At Yoder Lumber, our company hosts a yearly employee appreciation event of either a Christmas banquet or a summer picnic to give back and thank each employee. As a manager, if you have a small team, see if you can get approval to attend a local sporting event to help build camaraderie outside the office.

3. Take time to Mentor a Young Professional

Millennials are lagging is one area: personal finance. They are financially uneducated and are looking for someone to guide them in the right direction as someday they will need to have adequate savings to retire. According to [Pew Research Center](#)[4], Indebtedness (including mortgage, vehicle, credit cards, and student loans) of non-college educated Gen Y is $28,300 vs a college educated Gen Y of $137,000, a 5 x's difference. Young professionals need to be encouraged to get involved with other professional and networking groups. They are eager to learn and pick up new skills even if it's learning the proper etiquette on how to wine/ dine a new client.

4. Establish Reward Programs

Our HR manager shared a pain point of how he believes the roles have flipped from the employer interviewing the potential employee, to the employee asking the questions of: "What benefits and job advancement(s) do you have?" Reward programs can be implemented in your organization such as health and wellness, safety, recruitment incentives, and on the spot rewards as giving a gift card. Periodically we provide incentive lunches to our employees for attaining certain safety milestones. Just remember a little reward goes a long way to keeping your staff stimulated.

5. Have Quick Performance Reviews more often

Why do mangers dread performance reviews every year? They are long, tedious, and they seem to be the same for every member of your team. Putting all personal opinions aside about reviews, Blackhawk Network conducted a series of personal interview and research about Millennials. When asked, what is the key expectation for happiness at work: [64%](#)[5] of responders said having a performance review every six months. A quick check-in with each member of your team will not only show you care about them as human being but also for the employee's development for their career.

Managers need to understand the value in building trust with their employees and how this plays a vital role in the everyday output for a business. Remember happy employees are more productive than unhappy/disengaged employees. At the end of the day, each employee wants to feel valued. As a wise mentor and manager once shared with me, "If you love what you do, you will never work a day in your life."

Citations:

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4. Fry, Richard. Pew Research Center, 14 May 2014, www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/05/14/young-adults-student-debt-and-economic-well-being/.

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THE FIVE "WHY'S" OF
ROOT CAUSES

HOW TO STOP THE PROBLEM DOMINO EFFECT

— *TONY YODER*, CPTO

When problems occur, it is rare that they happen in isolation. Accidents don't just happen- the fender bender you saw on your way to work was caused by something. In the same way, problems in your business don't just happen, they are caused by something. The best way to fix these problems is to address their ultimate causes, known in Lean as "root causes".

Are you ready to discover the root causes of the problems you're company is facing?

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PROBLEM

Outbound LTL Shipments are being delayed

WHY 1:
Pickups aren't being scheduled as soon as shipments are ready.

WHY 2:
LTL pallets are being placed in the warehouse with truckload items without shipping manager's knowledge.

WHY 3:
Shipments that are supposed to be shipped LTL aren't properly labeled on the production paperwork.

WHY 4:
The inventory management system doesn't currently allow shipments to be labeled by shipment type.

ROOT CAUSE:
User-defined fields aren't being properly used in the inventory management system.