

18th November 1945.

Dear Sirs,

In reply to your questionnaire dated November 12th, we give the following particulars.

The temporary transfer of labour to other industries which took place earlier in the year had a very unsettling effect on the men. Great resentment was created and confidence was shaken. Furthermore stories of the big money paid in the war factories produced a great dissatisfaction, discipline became very difficult, there was great reluctance and often refusal to go on to other jobs on the part of the remaining men at the Tannery. When we were ready to take men back there was reluctance in many cases to return.

The result of all this was a whole atmosphere of mistrust, and we decided on frank and open discussion between management and labour with all cards on the table. We invited the co-operation of the Trades Union Officials, and especially the Shop Steward, on this basis. This move proved to be an outstanding success. Confidence has been largely restored, absenteeism and lateness are at a minimum. With one or two isolated exceptions we find a general willingness to work overtime when necessary. In general too we can report willingness on the part of labour to go on to any job when need arises. Discipline is not easy, but it is good, and we have great assistance in this from the Shop Steward.

We felt it would be good to give the background before answering the questionnaire.

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Do Em ployees stop away from work more frequently than before ?  
No - there is a certain amount of absenteeism amongst the girl labour.

Is Works discipline more difficult to maintain ?  
No.

Will your Em ployees undertake overtime when-ever required ?  
For the most part - Yes.

Have you difficulty in transferring Labour from one job to another ?  
Not when there is real need.

What do you consider would be the most likely incentive to increase production ?

We have found that teamwork on the basis of frank and open discussion has considerably increased production in several cases.



*Sent in answer to questionnaire from*

STATEMENT.

*British Leather Fed'n  
1945*

Production :

We are only on the fringe of unsuspected possibilities of increased production when there is the spirit of real teamwork in industry.

Our output has remained at 100 % of normal, as against a reduction in manpower of one third. The corresponding figure for the whole industry is 80 % production.

The figures are better than this because overtime has been greatly reduced with a marked improvement in the health of the workers.

Our Shop Steward stated "In the last two years, despite constantly changing type of work, with consequent alteration of wage rates, the flow of production has never faltered."

Wages :

Experience of the last two years has proved that teamwork produces higher wage earnings and maintained profits - that confidence promotes production - one worker formerly considered a grabber said "Money's not everything, its knowing on Monday that you'll get a fair wage on Saturday that counts."

Trade Union :

The attitude of Management is that the Trade Union is so essential a part of industrial teamwork that if it did not exist it would be necessary to invent it. It is the co-ordinating factor that enables labour to make its maximum contribution to the general well-being.

The Trade Union Secretary said to the men "What is being done here is important, not only for your firm, but for the whole of industry." The area (one of the most industrialised in the North West) Organiser said "I find more co-operation here than any works in my area."

Discipline rests fairly and firmly on the close alliance between Management and Trade Union, and Works Council.

Absenteeism and lateness present no problem.



This statement was drawn up by

John W. Nowell      general manager

John Tomlinson      chief production foreman

Tom Galtersall      shop steward

It was subsequently presented to the Works Council.  
After discussion it was unanimously accepted  
and recorded in the minutes as a correct  
record of the development over the last two  
years.