Elongating Equipment Life Spans

You have made a significant investment in your manufacturing equipment. What steps can you take to maximize the productive life of this equipment? Follow these 6 basic steps and you will greatly extend the productive life of your equipment and achieve the best possible ROI.

1. **Perform preventative maintenance (PM)**. As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This is certainly true when it comes to extending the life of your equipment. Refer to your equipment's service/maintenance manual to develop a systematic and scheduled PM process. Your equipment will last longer and perform more consistently over its service life.

2. **Providing proper and consistent lubrication** is the most crucial step you can take to elongate the lifespan of your equipment. In our experience, the single biggest factor in accelerated machine wear can be attributed to poor adherence to the recommended lubrication type and schedule. Think of proper lubrication as the life blood for your machine - because it is.

3. **Monitor lubrication quality** to identify potential problems early. Having the lubricants used in your equipment tested on a regular basis will provide two major benefits. First, you will be alerted to potentially serious wear problems and be able to address them before your machine goes down. Second, you will know exactly when lubricants need to be changed (based on testing results) therefore saving time and money.

4. **Keeping your machine clean** is also critical to long machine life. Machines run best and last longer when components are kept clean and not exposed to excessive dirt and grime. A secondary benefit of keeping your machine clean comes from the cleaning process itself. Many problems can be identified during cleaning like, oil leaks, loose or missing components, worn hoses and exposed/loose wires.

5. **Changing filters** on a regular basis is very important. All filters have a service life and must be replace at scheduled service intervals. Many filters will go into bypass mode when they become clogged. This could allow harmful contaminants to reach critical components, causing premature failure and shortened machine life.

6. **Maintaining wipers/seals and guarding**. Machines generally are designed with protection for critical areas taken into consideration. If these protective measures are not maintained, damage from items like dirt and cutting chips can work their way into critical and sensitive areas, causing premature wear.