



‘How can we be better?’

The company’s ultimate success depends on the most important thing about Boeing—its people

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PHOTO: GREG THON/BOEING

This is an amazing time to be at Boeing. The aerospace industry is rebounding, demand for new airplanes is increasing, and game-changing products like the 787 and 747-8 are in flight test, nearing delivery to customers.

As the world’s premier aerospace-based company, we do uniquely great things that benefit individuals, armed services and businesses around the globe.

While we have every reason to be proud of what we accomplish together, it’s important to remember that success is not an entitlement. We have to earn the loyalty and trust of our customers each and every day. They have a right to expect the safest and most efficient aircraft, unbeatable life-cycle costs, industry-leading reliability, and lasting value. We owe them no less.

Our commercial aviation business is intensely competitive. We are moving from a duopoly to a market with multiple competitors, not only in Europe but in China, Brazil, Canada and elsewhere. To compete, we must continue finding ways to work smarter and more efficiently. We must always ask ourselves, “How can we be better?”

We have a long tradition of employee involvement and engagement at Boeing. I see it at every Boeing site I visit, from Everett to Renton, Boeing Field to Auburn, Frederickson to South Carolina, which is profiled on Page 22 of this issue. Boeing employees are enthusiastic, motivated to excel and proud to be part of a company that continues to revolutionize flight.

We are improving our processes and production methods, focusing on growth opportunities and the disciplined execution of our business plan. But ultimately, our success depends on the single, most important thing about Boeing—our people. Boeing people are the heart and soul of our business.

Every day we draw upon our diverse backgrounds, talent and perspectives as we work toward common goals. We benefit from a broad range of ideas, experience, knowledge and creativity as we meet and overcome our challenges.

I’ve always believed that Boeing employees understand best how our work gets done, and know the most about how to improve it. Our job as leaders is to engage and empower them to do just that.

To that end, we must do everything we can to shape a company culture that is open, respectful and inclusive—where asking for help is seen as a strength and not a weakness, and there is no fear of reprisals. We must create an environment where everyone feels comfortable raising issues and objections and discussing problems.

The world continues to change at an astounding pace and we must change with it or risk being left behind, in the wake of others more nimble and adaptive. We must be leaders of change.

The 787 Dreamliner is aptly named; with that airplane, we have challenged the world to dream again. And we have challenged ourselves to explore and develop better ways of working, making the most of the best aerospace employees in the world. By continuing to draw upon our collective excellence, I am confident that we will succeed. ■