

IPI'S INSIDE INSIGHTS

A MONTHLY INTERNAL NEWS SOURCE

JUNE 2026

VOLUME 33



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01

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Ann Baughman | Sales & Marketing Manager



The end and start of the Fiscal Year is always a busy time for us at IPI, and this year has been no exception recently. IPI's customer service and sales team have been busy fielding requests for order status and last minute orders. Our shops and delivery teams have been working hard to meet as many customer requests as possible so our customers can use their FY26 funds on their orders. While our final sales numbers for FY26 won't be available for several weeks, current data shows that we will finish the year strong in many shops and have a good chance of meeting our overall sales goals for the year. This wouldn't be possible without the dedication and hard work of everyone within IPI, so thank you for all you do every day to help IPI achieve our goals and advance our mission!

However, while we are finishing up FY26, we have already been looking ahead to the fresh start that FY27 brings. The leadership team has been working on the FY27 budget, starting with sales budget discussions for all shops. While we want to see growth in all shops, many factors are taken into consideration when setting sales goals such as shop capacity, market and pricing trends, and equipment needs just to name a few. It's important that our budgets aim for growth, yet are realistic to attain. Cost budgets, including capital expenditures, are then determined. The business office puts all of these numbers together for the managers and shops to review and discuss their expected sustainability numbers for the year. Budgets should be finalized by the end of July.

Another area that the new FY creates is a fresh start is with our marketing plan. IPI's yearly marketing plan includes the objectives and tasks needed to assist IPI in meeting our sales goals. This plan usually includes things like marketing emails, trade shows, brochure/collateral needs, website updates, social media, new product needs and much more. A great deal of data is analyzed from the prior year such as marketing email statistics, sales by product lines, and sales by market. Receiving input from sales, customer service, and the shops is a vital piece in preparing the marketing plan as meeting our sales goals is truly a collaborative effort. Meeting and email requests for suggestions should be coming out in the next couple of weeks so that the marketing plan can be finalized by the end of July as well. In the meantime, don't hesitate to reach out to Chris Becker or myself if you have any marketing suggestions for the upcoming year.

02 STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

IPI Staff Work Anniversaries - July 2026

(Note: Each date marks an individual's State of Iowa start date)

JULY
6 Tony Ellison - 14 Years

JULY
30 Matt Scranton - 8 Years

JULY
6 Jacob Bonert - 11 Years

JULY
31 Chris Becker - 3 Years

JULY
8 Jeffrey Whitson - 13 Years

JULY
10 Dan Meyer - 6 Years

JULY
10 Nathan Van Wyk - 6 Years

JULY
21 Karen Donahue - 9 Years

JULY
23 Brian Suthers - 16 Years

JULY
25 Chad Squires - 29 Years



03 NEW PRODUCTS - JUNE



Inmate Sports Bras, White
FSPORTSBRAWHT



Emergency Linen Pack
FEMABEDDINGPACK

Safety Orange Option Added for Hi-Vis Items



04 2026 IPI AWARD NOMINEES

The votes are in: Here is your list of nominees for the 2026 IPI Awards! We greatly appreciate everyone who submitted nominations to recognize your fellow staff members, leaders and teams that go above and beyond in their positive impact at IPI. With that, here are your finalists for each of the three award categories:

Employee of the Year

Al Stecher
Tammy Nielsen
Neil Grundmeyer
Eric Depenning

Supervisor/Manager of the Year

Luke Fowler
Julie Holtorf
Justin Opfer
Keith Paulson
Ann Baughman
Clint Schmidt

Team of the Year

Anamosa Team
Rockwell City Team
Lean E-Learning Team
Commercial Team
Fort Madison Team



****Make sure to tune into next month's newsletter where we will reveal the winners of each category!****



LEAN CORNER

Clint Schmidt | General Operations Manager



How to Create Psychological Safety in the Workplace Pt. 2 (from Indeed)

How to promote psychological safety in the workplace

Promoting psychological safety in the workplace can allow your organization to become more innovative through open communication. The following are some ways in which you can foster a psychologically safe workplace.



Make psychological safety an explicit policy

Creating a policy around open communication can help foster a psychologically safe workplace. Make sure that the policy addresses any issues around staff approaching management by including things such as an open door policy, where all employees are able to approach management whenever needed.

Being able to bring up concerns or ideas to management will mean that employees feel more comfortable speaking their opinions and will allow you to handle any interpersonal issues between staff before they become a larger problem.

Facilitate open communication

One way to encourage open communication is to have team-building exercises. Team building exercises can help team members bond with each other which will make them feel more comfortable being themselves while at work.

Open communication can also be facilitated through developing a coaching culture, where people are teamed up to teach each other different skills. This allows team members to bond and they become more comfortable communicating with one another. This can also be done by having brainstorming sessions for projects. Before coming up with a solution, bring the team together to brainstorm ideas, with explicit instructions that all ideas are good ideas. Make sure to listen to each idea in order to further the psychologically safe workplace.

Establish norms for how to handle failure

One of the difficulties opposing psychological safety in the workplace is being worried about failure. By being open about failure, employees will be less afraid of making a mistake which can allow for new ideas to flow more smoothly.

Try talking about mistakes or failures in your team meetings. An example of this could be talking about a proposal that did not get approved and what the team could have done better. This way, teams are encouraged to talk about their failures as learning opportunities and continue to feel comfortable voicing their opinion without fear.

Create space for new ideas

Creating space for new ideas can help foster a psychologically safe workplace as it will encourage people to bring up their ideas. One way to do this would be to reward creative thinking. When an employee comes up with a creative solution to a problem, make sure to recognize their creativity. This will encourage others to think creatively as we all crave recognition for a job well done.



By creating space for new ideas, you are able to build relationships among your team and a psychologically safe workplace will be the result.

Embrace productive conflict

If there is a disagreement among coworkers on how to handle a project, try promoting a healthy dialogue instead of shutting it down. Get the team to come up with the pros and cons of each idea and then have a vote on which idea seems the best. That way, both sides can state their points and the conflict can be resolved without further issues coming up.

Having a team that feels comfortable having debates is a great way of fostering psychological safety in the workplace. You want employees to feel comfortable bringing up their ideas, even if they are not popular as perhaps the unpopular idea is actually more innovative.

When team members are able to debate issues, they become comfortable with stating their opinions and allow for feedback without getting hurt feelings. This is the cornerstone of a psychologically safe workplace and should be strived for.

Psychological safety in the workplace is something that can bring wonderful innovation and a relaxed atmosphere to your team. It is important to have workers that can work well together if you want a successful business, so by fostering psychological safety, you are creating a space where innovation is at the forefront.



GLOBAL UPDATES

Sara Schnotala | ERP Specialist



As we wrap up this year and look ahead to next year, we will focus on optimizing our internal processes and maximizing operational efficiency. The high-level key focus areas and goals for each category are detailed below and align with IPI's strategic goals.

ERP

Focus Area

Data Integrity & Integration

Primary Objective

Provide single source of truth for inventory, scheduling and resource planning to ensure 100% on-time delivery

- Training: Requirements, Videos, Webinars, Sandbox Training, Super Users
- Global Handbook
- Interdepartmentals
- Migration from "Old" Screens to "New" Screens

CI

Focus Area

Lean & Process Efficiency

Primary Objective

Cultivate a LEAN mindset to reduce lead times, eliminate the 8 wastes, and optimize Overall Equipment Effectiveness

- Updated Metrics on Metric Boards
- New Lean Training Videos
- Learning Library
- CI Projects
- Identify & Measure Waste Across IPI
- Standardized Job Titles/Functions: Inventory Control/Material Handler, Lean Clerks, etc.
- Updated I/I Incentive Program

QUALITY

Focus Area

Compliance & Excellence

Primary Objective

Ensure every unit meets specifications through Quality Control, root cause analysis, and adherence to standards

- Improved Quality Tracking Process: Internal Errors, External Errors, Reworks, RMAs, Costs
- Late Orders

PEOPLE

Focus Area

Develop Leaders & Problem Solvers

Primary Objective

Increased opportunities for training and growth

- Onboarding: State Crossovers, I/I's
- Communication

07

A "SIGN" OF THE TIMES



This month, IPI leadership received some positive words from former IPI Director Dan Clark, who shared about the great work coming out of the Anamosa Sign Shop:

"My son was back in Des Moines recently for a wedding and stopped by the West Des Moines police station to check on his Eagle Scout project, which was a tribute to fallen officers.

Seven years later (it was completed Autumn 2019, not long before COVID), the sign shop work is literally as good as new!

What an amazing program you've got there in Anamosa!"

THANKS FOR READING!

Please direct any newsletter ideas, employee recognitions, new developments, and Star Shop of the Month requests to chris.becker@iowa.gov