

1. Joined toastmasters because of emphasis on punctuality and being on time. **Recently DTM Godfrey said to me 'In a single day, week, or year God gives us all the same amount of time. What we do with it accounts in large measure for the degree of success we enjoy. To disregard it is not merely a vote of no confidence in ourselves but is a crippling blow to those who are unfortunate enough to have to rely on us'.** The issue had dominated my thinking for some years-The Company I have the honour to lead 'The Uniform Centre' had suffered tremendously from late coming to work affecting our commitment to on time delivery and percolating throughout the very fabric of the organization.
2. Issue had been addressed by former TM Bruce Taylor who introduced me to movement in a study 'The Effect of the public transportation system on worker productivity due to late arrival to work by staff members at Caribbean Greetings Corp.'
3. John McFarlane who was head of the Transport Authority pointed out in June 1994 that '\$300m is lost every year due to losses in manpower time off the job. In addition if non productivity due to workers frame of mind caused by anxiety with the transportation system is taken into account the sum would rise to \$1.0Bil per annum.
4. No current figures Jamaica –situation up to recently startling in UK and USA. 2006 'Personnel Today' Hr Magazine pointed out that \$7.7 bill was being lost annually in productivity in the UK due to lateness. In fact 49% of UK workers snuck through the door late on a daily basis. In March 2007 ABC's Good Morning America reported that 15-20% of the US population was consistently late especially when it comes to work. Hear this 8 out of every ten American CEO's were late for meetings and those who were late 10 mins everyday cost the US economy \$90 bill in lost productivity. Of the 22 persons in my own Company 4 were chronically late during the period 1995-1998 and others consistently so.
5. Reasons given for late coming: Taylor 'due to reliance on Public Transportation...they are late for work'. UK 'Commuting Difficulties, parental or career responsibilities or unforeseen circumstances such as illness of a family member or simply oversleeping. In Uniform Centre's case the reasons were not substantially different in the period between 1995 -1998-bus late and baby sick.
6. What were the solutions? For three years I cajoled, reasoned, ranted and raved, swore and cursed to avail. So I went first to my Friend Fernando who at that time was head of the JMA's Garment Committee and MD of Cupid Mfg and asked him how he did it. He said he just locked the gate a 8 o' clock. So I went to Paulette Chevannes then Principal at Charley Smith and asked her. She said she just locked the gate. So I said OK So I went and just started locking the gate myself armed with the key and a fierce demeanour. It worked somewhat and their was grudging improvement.
7. I looked at what I was doing and said 'Greg you are Goddamn stupid'. I was being inhuman to myself and those I was locking out. All I had to do was sit down with the Senior Managers and work out a simple system and discuss it with staff. What was the system? If people come late to work you don't have to start them. Send them back home. It worked we no longer today have an issue of late coming

and most Team Members are at work 30 minutes early and others generally are there at 7:30 or within the tolerance 'period of 15mins'.

8. This is not a one size fit all method though. Each person and each organization must find their own strategies. Discuss with persons in your organization why they are late. Implement your policies with firmness and compassion. Perhaps the solution is providing transportation for employees. This has worked for some. Perhaps it is helping individuals work through their own issues. But remember that the change must begin with you. As TM Harvey MacKay once said 'improve your time and your time will improve you' and I love the words of Lord Horatio Nelson 'I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time and it has made a man of me'.