

## The Vermeer Podcast – Episode 10

### Leading Through a Crisis

Mark Core:

Greetings. This is Mark Core, Chief Marketing Officer and Executive Vice President here at Vermeer Corporation in Pella, Iowa. I'm a 24-year veteran of the brand and get the opportunity every day to work with our aftermarket lifecycle solutions group, our global brand marketing organization, as well as our agriculture and forage solutions groups here at Vermeer.

As I think about learning lessons from going through our crisis of the tornado, I'm always intrigued by watching and learning from leaders in different scenarios. In fact, recently with COVID-19, I've spent a lot of time observing and watching different leaders, whether they would be from private business, or they'd be from governmental elected officials, and watching the different dynamics of how they communicate and how they make decisions, and how they get people aligned and focused. As I think about a big learning lesson for me, is watching our CEO, Jason Andringa, to be able to come back to the organization within 24 hours of after the tornado hit and be very clear on one objective.

And that objective was to get everybody back to work in 45 days. And certainly, I was inspired by that, but it probably took some time for me to reflect on the value of just one objective. He could have come back with multiple objectives around keeping our employees safe and minimizing financial disruption, and taking care of our valued customers while we rebuild. But the reality is that I think he knew that if he got everybody back to work in 45 days, there was a much greater chance of those other things simply happening because we were back in full operation. And so the one objective from what I could see and was a part of, then essentially had less debate among those that are working 24 hours a day in unknown situations, and trying to make the best decisions. It was motivating because we knew that our employees wanted to get back to work. They needed to get back to work.

And then certainly we knew that if we were working and shipping parts and supporting our customers, that those that depend on our brand and our partnership in the marketplace would be able to see very little disruption from the particular crisis that we were dealing with. And so that was definitely a leadership lesson for me. And one that if I ever would be in leadership in a crisis again, that I will certainly reflect on.

The other scenario is that you do everything on a daily basis to be prepared for when that crisis happens. And I think about from our brand perspective and how we work hard every day to deliver a brand promise to the marketplace, that our customers expect from Vermeer. And hopefully that, although it was known by our customer base, that we had went through a horrific an event, that they felt good that the brand that they had chosen to align with was one that had strength from a variety of scenarios within the organization, as well as our distribution channel. And that, although there may be a slight disruption, that their expectation would be that we would be stronger than ever. And when we come through this, that their disruption would be minimal.

And so those are my lessons. I appreciate the opportunity to be able to share them with you. And thank you for your time.