

Milling in the old mill

digital INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 26, 1970

SUBJECT: HOW TO JOIN THE DIGITAL
HEALTH CLUB

TO: Ken Brabitz

FROM: Remo Vogelsang

cc: Don White ✓

DEPARTMENT: PDP-8 Engineering

I read your memo you sent to Don White this week. Your letter sounds almost like a complaint, which tells me that you are probably not aware of the wise planning in our Company organization. Didn't you have a lot of fun, finding out everything about DEC organization by strolling around and getting paid for it? Walking is supposed to be very healthy, and remember, not every Company is willing to pay all the expenses for an Employee Health Club.

When I myself, as a newcomer, had the privilege to get a module released, I was in the extraordinary position not to know anything about which building is which, whether Dick Best was an accounting clerk or the Safety Officer. This of course, allowed me to walk at least twice the distance you could afford to. Now, do not give up, Ken.

In case you can find a reason to release your module to production, you will be real lucky. The Company will offer you an advanced "Circuit Training Course", which will include the longest DIGITAL Stairway Run possible. Keep your boots ready!!!!



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 26, 1970

SUBJECT: "Travels with Ken" or
"How NOT to get a Module into Production"

TO: Don White

FROM: Ken Brabitz

DEPARTMENT: Computer Special Systems

I was sitting at my desk (Building 21-3) one morning when the phone rang.

"Good morning, this is in the Model Shop. If you come over and sign your PR form, we can get MS488 into Limited Release."

"What's a PR form?" I asked.

"A Production Release form."

"OK! I'll be right over," I said.

In due course, I got to the Model Shop (Building 5-3).

"Where's?" I asked.

"Over there!"

"Hi, I'm here to sign the PR form," I said.

"OK! Let me check it first before you sign it".

"Fine", I said.

"Well, where is it?"

"How do I know? You called me to come over and sign it", I replied.

"But you have to get it and fill it out".

"Where do you get these PR forms?" I asked.

"Dick Best's secretary has them".

Later in Dick Best's office (Building 5-3) ...

"Are you Dick Best's secretary?" I asked.

"No", pointing to another girl.

"Hello! I would like to get a PR form for a module," I said.

"Has Dick assigned a number to the module?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Here's the form. After you have filled it out and have had the Product Line Manager sign it, bring it back, and I'll type it up for Dick's approval".

"If you want a sample to show how one of these forms are filled out, go to Document Control".

Since this was my first trip through the mill, I went to Document Control (Building 4-4). I got a sample and returned to my desk (Building 21-3). I filled out the PR form and signed it and then returned it to Dick Best's secretary (Building 5-3). I gave her the form, and she typed it.

"Now you have to get the Product Line Manager to sign it."

I took my PR form to the Product Line Manager (Building 5-2).

"He's in a meeting now, I'll have him sign it and I'll call you".

"Thank you," I said.

I returned to my desk (Building 21-3), went to lunch (Building 5-4). I returned to my desk (Building 21-3). Phone rang!

"Hi, your PR form is signed".

"Thank you. I'll be right over". I retrieved my PR form from the Product Line Manager (Building 5-2) and went to the Model Shop (Building 5-3).

"Here's the PR form all signed and everything," I said.

"Do you have your circuit Description filled out?"

"My WHAT?" I shouted.

"Your Circuit Description form."

"Where do I get one of those?" I asked.

"Dick Best's secretary."

I returned to Dick Best's secretary (Building 5-3) and got a Circuit Description form with the suggestion that I get a sample from Document Control. I got my sample from Document Control (Building 4-4) and returned to my desk (Building 21-3). I filled out the Circuit Description form except for the Logic Diagram. It took four sheets of D size paper to layout the circuit, and they wanted me to put that on an 8½ x 11 piece of paper. I returned to the Model Shop (Building 5-3).

"Here's the Circuit Description", I said.

"Fine! In checking this layout, I've found there are two I.C.'s that do not have DEC part numbers. You'll have to get DEC part numbers assigned before the modules can be put into production".

"Where do I get a part number assigned?" I asked.

"I think you have to get it from the buyer".

I went to Purchasing (Building 5-4) and saw the buyer.

"How do I get a DEC part number for a couple of I.C.'s I'm using on my new module?" I asked.

"You have to get the forms from Document Control".

By this time, I was getting to be good friends with the people in Document Control (Building 4-4), so I got the forms to have a number assigned.

"You have to write a spec sheet for your I.C.'s and then get the buyer and the component engineer to sign this form before I can give you a part number."

"What kind of data goes on the spec sheet?" I asked.

"Get a data sheet from the buyer and if it meets all of your requirements, just copy the information for your spec sheet."

I went back to the buyer (Building 5-4) and got the data sheets for the I.C.'s. I then returned to my desk (Building 21-3) and wrote the spec sheets and filled out the DEC part number request form. I then returned to Purchasing (Building 5-4) and got the buyer to sign the form. After a bit of walking, I also found the component engineer and got his signature. Then it was back to Document Control (Building 4-4) where I got the part numbers assigned. From there, it was back to the Model Shop (Building 5-3) where ...

"Here are the part numbers for the I.C.'s," I said.

"OK., in about three or four weeks you can have the first modules."

The day after that, I was sitting at my desk when the phone rang.

"Hello", I said.

"This is in the Model Shop. If you come over and sign your PR form, we can get MS487 into Limited Release"...

"Hello? Hello? Hello?"...