



UNSUNG HERO AWARD

WINNER

John Dawson,

production planning manager, Fogarty (Filled Products) Ltd

Here's a tale that is sure to bring you out in a cold sweat. It's the height of summer 2017 at Fogarty Filled Products in Boston, Lincolnshire, and the company's entire purchasing team are suddenly taken with various long-term sicknesses. For a firm with over 1,000 different products across 19 different manufacturing lines, this has the potential to be a disaster.

However, in times of crisis, every company needs a hero. In Fogarty's case, this came in the shape of John Dawson. In his day job, John is the company's planning manager, responsible for scheduling every pillow, duvet, mattress protector, cot bed and cushion that the factory produces. If that wasn't already enough, he also liaises with the company's operations and sales teams, ensuring that the factory's capacity is properly planned.

More than enough to keep anyone busy, you would think. Not in John's case, though. When

the void appeared in the purchasing team, John took it upon himself to take on the role of the absent staff members, stepping up to the plate to source all the fabrics and fibre fillings, feather and threads, packaging and labels that are needed to keep the plant running.

With no experience of purchasing, he taught himself 'on the fly' about the intricate details of the job, all while still running the planning team. Added to this, about six weeks into his unofficial new role, John began training an external purchasing supplier to help out and take over part of the role. From nothing, John has become the company's purchasing expert. Even today, he is still performing both his job in planning and his adopted role in purchasing.

John was entered for this award in secret, so hopefully this success will have come as a pleasant surprise to 2017's Unsung Hero. Congratulations, John.

FINALISTS

Paul Varty,
condition monitoring
manager, *PEME*

Martin McGrother,
slab yard team member,
British Steel

Kelsey Dobbs,
colourist, *A Schulman Inc*

Michael Hooper,
continuous improvement
facilitator, *Entek
International*

Julie Tasker,
project engineer, *Steeper*

Mike Nichols,
technical operative, Alpen
Manufacturing Team,
Weetabix Food Company

JUDGES' COMMENTS

“The planning manager is typically one of the most demanding roles on any site. To be able to take over, at short notice, the purchasing activities as well would be a stretch too far for most. On top of that, to be able develop expertise in the area, to the extent of becoming the company's 'go-to guy', is the very definition of an Unsung Hero.”