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# Root Cause Failure Analysis

This book was developed to help electric motor technicians and engineers prevent repeated failures because the root cause of failure was never determined. There are numerous reasons for not pursuing the actual cause of failure including:

- A lack of time.
- Failure to understand the total cost.
- A lack of experience.
- A lack of useful facts needed to determine the root cause.

The purpose of this book is to address the lack of experience in identifying the root cause of motor failures. By using a proven methodology combined with extensive lists of known causes of failures, one can identify the actual cause of failure without being an "industry expert." In fact,

when properly used, this material, will polish one's diagnostic skills that would qualify one as an industry expert.

The book is divided into the various components of an electric motor. In addition to a brief explanation of the function of each component and the stresses that act upon them, numerous examples of the most common causes of failure are also presented.

Since it is not always possible to pinpoint the exact cause of failure, some examples are used more than once. Due to a lack of all the necessary facts associated with the application and history of a given machine, it is only possible to assign the root cause to the most probable scenario.

A reference section is included at the back of this book for those wanting to further research root cause failure analysis.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Many of the pictures in this book are of failures that have occurred where the actual cause was identified. However, in some cases the exact cause was never verified, nonetheless they are included along with the author's opinion of the most likely cause. In other cases, the pictures are of parts that have not failed, but the pictures are useful in illustrating how and where the part could fail.

It is difficult to segregate each type of failure into nice distinct categories and to do so would require jumping back and forth from section to section which would cause some amount of discontinuity. Hence, there is a certain amount of overlap and duplication of photos to clarify specific points.

There is no attempt to single out a particular motor manufacturer or to suggest that one product has more defects or failures than another. For this reason, we have not identified the manufacturer of the parts or motors. In some cases, the failed part is not even an original equipment part. Also, we have made no effort to identify who may have repaired a particular motor. The intent of this book is not to place blame but to assist in a correct diagnostic procedure that will prevent repetitive failures.

The authors would like to express our appreciation to all those who have donated pictures for this edition and hope that we will continue to receive more pictures of unique types of failures to fill the gaps.

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# Table of Contents

	<b>Section</b>
Root Cause Methodology .....	1
Bearing Failures .....	2
Stator Failures .....	3
Shaft Failures .....	4
Rotor Failures .....	5
Mechanical Failures .....	6
DC Motor Failures .....	7
Accessory Failures .....	8
Case Studies .....	9
Reference Materials .....	10
Index .....	11

# 1

## Root Cause Methodology

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to failure surveys .....	1-2
Root cause methodology .....	1-2
Summary of motor stresses .....	1-2
Analysis of the motor and system .....	1-4
Arriving at the correct conclusion .....	1-5
Basic AC motor nomenclature and common alternatives .....	1-6
Basic DC motor nomenclature and common alternatives .....	1-7
Methodology forms	
Appearance of motor and system .....	1-8
Application considerations .....	1-9
Maintenance history .....	1-10
Motor system and environment checklist .....	1-11
Stator coil layout for location and identification of fault .....	1-12
Inspection reports .....	1-13

# 2

## Bearing Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Determining bearing life .....	2-2
The fatigue process and stresses that act upon rolling element bearings .....	2-2
Methodology for analyzing rolling element bearing failures .....	2-4
Tips for interpreting bearing failures .....	2-4
Lubrication .....	2-5
Grease lubrication .....	2-5
Oil lubrication .....	2-7
Oil sight glasses .....	2-7
Oil level .....	2-8
Automatic oilers .....	2-8
Oil mist .....	2-8
Forced lubrication .....	2-9
Lubrication precautions .....	2-10
Rolling-element bearings	
Thermal stress .....	2-12
Dynamic and static loading stress .....	2-16
Vibration and shock stress .....	2-19
Environmental stress .....	2-21
Mechanical stress .....	2-23
Electrical stress .....	2-25
Vertical motor bearing systems: Special cases .....	2-29
Introduction to sleeve bearing failures .....	2-35
Methodology for analyzing sleeve bearing failures .....	2-36
Thermal stress .....	2-37
Babbitt grade .....	2-38
Some common causes of failure .....	2-38
Dynamic and static loading stress .....	2-40
Environmental stress .....	2-42
Mechanical stress .....	2-44
Vibration and shock stress .....	2-46
Electrical stress .....	2-47

# 3

## Stator Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to winding failures .....	3-4
Analysis of winding failures .....	3-4
Failure modes .....	3-4
Failure patterns .....	3-5
Appearance considerations .....	3-6
Application considerations .....	3-6
Maintenance history .....	3-6
Summary of winding failures and methodology .....	3-6
Symmetrical damage pattern with all phases overheated .....	3-6
Symmetrical damage pattern with 1/3 or 2/3 of phases overheated .....	3-7
Symmetrical damage pattern with 1/2 of phases overheated .....	3-7
Asymmetrical damage pattern (winding is grounded) .....	3-8
Asymmetrical damage pattern (excluding grounds) .....	3-8
The need to separate cause and effect .....	3-8
Line and ground faults .....	3-8
Special thermal patterns .....	3-9
Thermal stress .....	3-10
Thermal aging process .....	3-10
Overloading .....	3-11
Voltage variation .....	3-11
Voltage unbalance .....	3-11
Winding damage caused by single-phased condition .....	3-12
Four cases where three-phase motors may run single-phased .....	3-12
Ambient .....	3-12
Load cycling, starting and stalling .....	3-13
Poor ventilation .....	3-13
Circulating currents .....	3-14

Photographs of damage caused by thermal stress	
Overloading .....	3-15
Unbalanced voltage .....	3-16
Single phased .....	3-17
Electrical stress .....	3-18
Dielectric aging .....	3-18
Transient voltages .....	3-18
Partial discharge (corona) and tracking .....	3-19
Insulation inadequacies and defects .....	3-19
Photographs of damage caused by electrical stress	
Reclosure/transient voltages .....	3-20
Grounds and shorts .....	3-21
Partial discharge (corona) .....	3-23
Mechanical stress .....	3-24
Winding movement .....	3-24
Mechanical clearance .....	3-25
Damaged motor leads .....	3-26
Improper rotor-to-stator geometry (loss of air gap) .....	3-26
Poor lugging of connections .....	3-27
Miscellaneous mechanical stresses .....	3-27
Photographs of damage caused by mechanical stress	
Winding movement and coil bracing .....	3-29
Damaged motor leads .....	3-33
Improper rotor-to-stator geometry (loss of air gap) .....	3-35
Failed balancing weights .....	3-37
Poor workmanship .....	3-38
Environmental stress .....	3-44
Moisture .....	3-44
Abrasion .....	3-44
Poor ventilation .....	3-44
Chemical damage .....	3-45
Photographs of damage caused by environmental stress	
Moisture, corrosion and contamination .....	3-45
Abrasion .....	3-48
Poor ventilation .....	3-49
Winding materials .....	3-50
Properties of insulation materials .....	3-50
Treatment methods .....	3-50
Temperature .....	3-50
Wedge material .....	3-51

Appearance offers clues ..... 3-51

Proper winding insulation ..... 3-51

Inspect laminations ..... 3-51

Scuff paper ..... 3-52

Location of failure is an important clue ..... 3-52

Photographs of damage caused by winding materials

    Contaminated wire ..... 3-53

    Defective wire ..... 3-54

# 4

## Shaft Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to shaft failures .....	4-2
Motor shaft materials .....	4-2
Stress systems acting on shafts .....	4-2
Stress/strain curves .....	4-3
The tools of shaft failure analysis .....	4-3
Failure analysis sequence .....	4-4
Methodology for analysis .....	4-4
Failure mode .....	4-4
Failure pattern .....	4-4
Appearance considerations .....	4-4
Application considerations .....	4-5
Maintenance history .....	4-5
Causes of failure .....	4-6
Defining the fatigue process .....	4-6
Stress cycle (S-N) diagrams .....	4-7
Appearance of fatigue fractures .....	4-7
The impact of stress concentrations on fatigue strength .....	4-7
Areas of highest concentration .....	4-9
Shaft keyways .....	4-10
Dynamic and mechanical stress .....	4-11
Environmental stress .....	4-14
Thermal stress .....	4-16
Residual stress .....	4-19
Electromagnetic stress .....	4-23



# 5

## Rotor Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to rotor failures .....	5-3
Methodology for analyzing rotor failures .....	5-4
Failure class .....	5-4
Failure pattern .....	5-6
Appearance considerations .....	5-6
Application considerations .....	5-6
Maintenance history .....	5-6
Thermal stress .....	5-7
Appearance .....	5-7
Failure class .....	5-7
Rotor sparking .....	5-7
Photographs of damage caused by thermal stress .....	5-8
Dynamic stress .....	5-12
Appearance .....	5-12
Failure class .....	5-12
Centrifugal force (overspeed) .....	5-12
Cyclic stress .....	5-12
Photographs of damage caused by dynamic stress	
Vibration and loose rotor bars .....	5-13
Improper rotor-to-stator geometry (loss of air gap) .....	5-14
Centrifugal force (overspeed) .....	5-15
Mechanical stress .....	5-17
Appearance .....	5-17
Failure class .....	5-17
Rotor casting problems .....	5-17
Aluminum versus copper construction .....	5-17
Swaging of rotor bars .....	5-19

Fabricated rotor dissymmetry .....	5-19
The impact of rotor skew .....	5-19
Photographs of damage caused by mechanical stress	
Casting variations and voids .....	5-21
Improper design or poor workmanship .....	5-23
Environmental stress .....	5-27
Appearance .....	5-27
Failure class .....	5-27
Photographs of damage caused by environmental stress .....	5-27
Magnetic stress .....	5-28
Appearance .....	5-28
Failure class .....	5-28
Electromagnetic effect .....	5-28
Unbalanced magnetic pull and rotor rub .....	5-29
Electromagnetic noise and vibration .....	5-30
Photographs of damage caused by magnetic stress	
Fatigue or part breakage .....	5-31
Electrical/electromagnetic .....	5-32
Residual stress .....	5-33
Appearance .....	5-33
Failure class .....	5-33
Photographs of damage caused by residual stress .....	5-33
Miscellaneous stress .....	5-35
Appearance .....	5-35
Failure class .....	5-35
Photographs of damage caused by miscellaneous stress .....	5-35
Special cases in induction rotor testing .....	5-37

# 6

## Mechanical Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to mechanical failures .....	6-3
The motor cooling system .....	6-3
Air ducts .....	6-5
Unusual cooling systems .....	6-6
Cooling fans .....	6-6
Importance of fan positioning and direction of rotation .....	6-8
Air deflectors .....	6-8
Windings shorting to air deflectors .....	6-9
Internal air deflectors .....	6-9
Two-piece air deflectors .....	6-10
Loose or noisy air deflectors .....	6-10
Damaged air deflectors .....	6-10
Special considerations .....	6-10
Photographs of cooling fan failures .....	6-11
Photographs of motor screens .....	6-13
Motor terminal boxes .....	6-14
Motor terminal box explosions .....	6-14
Example of a terminal box explosion .....	6-15
Internal pressure rise due to faults .....	6-15
Terminal box bursting pressure .....	6-15
Motor terminal box insulated connections .....	6-16
Large terminal boxes .....	6-16
Cable supports .....	6-16
Proper sealing and drainage .....	6-16
Recommendations .....	6-16
Photographs of motor terminal boxes and failures .....	6-17

Lifting devices ..... 6-19

- Lifting accessories ..... 6-21
- Lifting standards ..... 6-21
- Operating personnel ..... 6-21

Mounting and alignment ..... 6-22

- Problems associated with magnetic centering ..... 6-24
- Magnetic centering effects on sleeve bearing induction motors ..... 6-24
  - Dual magnetic centers ..... 6-25
  - Load effect on magnetic center ..... 6-25
  - Tapered bore or rotor ..... 6-25
- Overhung load problems ..... 6-26
- Photographs of misalignment failures ..... 6-27
- Guide to motor alignment ..... 6-31

Miscellaneous mechanical failures ..... 6-32

Unique problems ..... 6-32

- Heat source considerations ..... 6-32
- Joints ..... 6-32
- Photographs of miscellaneous mechanical damage and failures ..... 6-32

# 7

## DC Motor Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to DC motors .....	7-2
Armatures .....	7-2
Thermal stress .....	7-3
Electrical stress .....	7-3
Mechanical stress .....	7-4
Dynamic stress .....	7-4
Commutators .....	7-7
Burnishing the commutator of a DC motor .....	7-7
Slot bar marking: causes and cures .....	7-8
Other commutator wear patterns .....	7-9
Brushes and brushholders .....	7-13
Carbon brushes: causes of unusual wear rates .....	7-13
Brush pressure and spring tension .....	7-13
Field coils (shunt fields) .....	7-17
Thermal stress .....	7-17
Mechanical stress .....	7-18
Environmental stress .....	7-18
Importance of symmetry .....	7-18
Interpoles and series fields .....	7-20
Compensating windings .....	7-23
DC motor ventilation .....	7-25
Shaft currents and tachometers .....	7-27

# 8

## Accessory Failures

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction .....	8-2
Surge capacitors and lightning arresters .....	8-2
Thermal protection .....	8-2
Oil reservoir heaters .....	8-3
Couplings .....	8-4
Sheaves/pulleys .....	8-4
Auxiliary fans/blowers .....	8-4
Vibration sensors .....	8-4
Photographs of accessories	
Sheave/pulley application consideration .....	8-5
Couplings .....	8-6

# 9

## Case Studies

<b>Section Outline</b>	<b>Page</b>
Winding connection failure .....	9-2
Misapplication of a motor .....	9-5
Improperly modified spherical sleeve bearing .....	9-7

# 10

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# 11

## Index

# Index

## A

- Accessories
  - accessory failures, introduction to, 8-2
  - auxiliary fans/blowers, 8-4
  - couplings, 8-4
  - oil reservoir heaters, 8-3
  - sheaves/pulleys, 8-4
  - surge capacitors and lightning arresters, 8-2
  - thermal protection, 8-2
  - vibration sensors, 8-4
- Air deflectors, 6-8
  - damaged, 6-10
  - internal, 6-9
  - loose or noisy, 6-10
  - special considerations, 6-10
  - two-piece, 6-10
  - windings shorting to, 6-9
- Air ducts, 6-5
- Air gap, loss of, 3-26
- Alignment, mounting and, 6-22
  - guide to motor alignment, 6-31
  - magnetic centering effects on sleeve bearing induction motors, 6-24
    - dual magnetic centers, 6-25
    - load effect on magnetic center, 6-25
    - tapered bore or rotor, 6-25
  - overhung load problems, 6-26
  - problems associated with magnetic centering, 6-24
- Aluminum versus copper construction, rotors, 5-17
- Ambient, 3-12
- Appearance considerations
  - bearings
    - rolling element, 2-5
    - sleeve, 2-36
  - rotor, 5-6
  - shaft, 4-4
  - windings, 3-6
- Application considerations
  - bearings
    - rolling element, 2-5
    - sleeve, 2-36
  - rotor, 5-6
  - shaft, 4-5
  - windings, 3-6
- Armature
  - dynamic stress, 7-4
  - electrical stress, 7-3

- mechanical stress, 7-4
- thermal stress, 7-3

## B

- Babbitt grade, 2-38
  - Bearings
    - determining life, 2-2
    - duplex pairs, mounting, 2-30
    - oil reservoir heaters, 8-3
    - rolling element
      - fatigue process, 2-2
      - dynamic and static loading stress, 2-16
      - electrical stress, 2-25
      - environmental stress, 2-21
      - lubrication, 2-5
      - mechanical stress, 2-23
      - methodology for analyzing rolling element bearing failures, 2-4
      - tips for interpreting bearing failures, 2-4
      - thermal stress, 2-12
      - vertical motor bearing systems: special cases, 2-29
        - bearing size and thrust rating, 2-31
        - design comparisons, 2-30
        - duplex pairs, mounting, 2-30
        - oil leaks, 2-32
        - splashplate mounting, 2-33
        - tilt pad bearings, 2-33
      - vibration and shock stress, 2-19
    - sleeve
      - dynamic and static loading stress, 2-40
      - electrical stress, 2-47
      - environmental stress, 2-42
      - introduction to sleeve bearing failures, 2-35
      - mechanical stress, 2-44
      - methodology for analyzing sleeve bearing failures, 2-36
      - thermal stress, 2-37
        - babbitt grade, 2-38
        - some common causes of failure, 2-38
      - vibration and shock stress, 2-46
  - Brushes, DC motor, 7-13
    - brush pressure and spring tension, 7-13
    - carbon brushes: causes of unusual wear rates, 7-13
  - Brushholders, DC motor, 7-13
  - Burnishing the commutator of a DC motor, 7-7
- ## C
- Cable supports, 6-16
  - Carbon brushes, see Brushes, DC motor
  - Case studies
    - improperly modified spherical sleeve bearing, 9-7
    - misapplication of a motor, 9-5
    - winding connection failure, 9-2
  - Casting problems, rotors, 5-17

Centrifugal force (overspeed), rotors, 5-12

Circulating currents, 3-14

Commutator

- burnishing, 7-7
- wear patterns
  - other commutator wear patterns, 7-9
  - slot bar marking: causes and cures, 7-7

Compensating windings, 7-23

Connection

- damaged leads, 3-26
- failure case study, 9-2
- insulated, 6-16
- poor lugging of, 3-27

Cooling fans, 6-6

- DC motor ventilation, 7-25
- fan positioning and direction of rotation, 6-8
- poor ventilation, 3-13, 3-44

Cooling, motor, 6-3

- air deflectors, 6-8
  - damaged, 6-10
  - internal, 6-9
  - loose or noisy, 6-10
  - special considerations, 6-10
  - two-piece, 6-10
  - windings shorting to, 6-9
- air ducts, 6-5
- cooling fans, 6-6
  - DC motor ventilation, 7-25
  - fan positioning and direction of rotation, 6-8
  - poor ventilation, 3-13, 3-44
  - unusual cooling systems, 6-6

Copper, see Aluminum versus copper construction, rotors

Corona, see Partial discharge (corona) and tracking

Couplings, 8-4

Cyclic stress, rotors, 5-12

## D

DC motors

- armatures, 7-2
- brushes and brushholders, 7-13
- commutators, 7-7
- compensating windings, 7-23
- field coils (shunt fields), 7-17
- interpoles and series fields, 7-20
- introduction to, 7-2
- shaft currents and tachometers, 7-27
- ventilation, 7-25

Dielectric aging, 3-18

Dynamic stress

- armatures, 7-4
- rotor, 5-12
- shaft, 4-11

Dynamic and static loading stress

- rolling element bearings, 2-16
- sleeve bearings, 2-40

## E

Electrical stress

- armatures, 7-3
- bearings
  - rolling element, 2-25
  - sleeve, 2-36, 2-47
- windings, 3-18
  - dielectric aging, 3-18
  - insulation inadequacies and defects, 3-19
  - partial discharge (corona) and tracking, 3-19
  - transient voltages, 3-18

Electromagnetic stress, shaft, 4-23

Environmental stress

- bearings
  - rolling element, 2-21
  - sleeve, 2-42
- field coils (shunt fields), 7-18
- rotor, 5-27
- shaft, 4-14
- windings, 3-44
  - abrasion, 3-44
  - chemical damage, 3-45
  - moisture, 3-44
  - poor ventilation, 3-13, 3-44

## F

Fabricated rotor dissymmetry, 5-19

Failure class, rotor

- methodology for analyzing, 5-4
- dynamic stress, 5-12
- environmental stress, 5-27
- magnetic stress, 5-28
- mechanical stress, 5-17
- miscellaneous stress, 5-35
- residual stress, 5-33
- thermal stress, 5-7

Failure modes

- bearings
  - rolling element, 2-4
  - sleeve, 2-36
- shaft, 4-4
- windings, 3-4

## Failure patterns

- bearings
  - rolling element, 2-4
  - sleeve, 2-36
- rotor, 5-6
- shaft, 4-4
- windings, 3-5

## Failure surveys, introduction to, 1-2

## Fans, 6-6

- DC motor ventilation, 7-25
- fans/blowers, auxiliary, 8-4
- fan positioning and direction of rotation, 6-8
- poor ventilation, 3-13, 3-44

## Fatigue

- fractures, appearance of, 4-7
- process, defining for shafts, 4-6

## Field coils (shunt fields), 7-17

- environmental stress, 7-18
- mechanical stress, 7-18
- symmetry, importance of, 7-18
- thermal stress, 7-17

**G**

Grease, see Lubrication

**I**

## Insulation

- appearance offers clues, 3-51
- inspect laminations, 3-51
- location of failure offers important clue, 3-52
- proper winding insulation, 3-51
- properties of insulation materials, 3-50
- scuff paper, 3-52
- temperature, 3-50
- treatment methods, 3-50
- wedge material, 3-51

## Interpoles, 7-20

**J**

Joints, 6-32

**K**

Keyways, shaft, 4-10

**L**

Laminations, inspect, 3-51

Leads, damaged, 3-26

## Lifting

- accessories, 6-21
- devices, 6-19
- operating personnel, 6-21
- standards, 6-21

Lightning arresters and surge capacitors, 8-2

Load cycling, 3-13

## Lubrication

- automatic oilers, 2-8
- forced lubrication, 2-9
- grease, 2-5
- oil, 2-7
- oil leaks, vertical motors, 2-32
- oil level, 2-8
- oil mist, 2-8
- oil sight glasses, 2-7
- precautions, 2-10

Lugs, poor lugging of connections, 3-27

**M**

Magnetic stress, rotors, 5-28

- electromagnetic effect, 5-28
- unbalanced magnetic pull and rotor rub, 5-29
- electromagnetic noise and vibration, 5-30

## Maintenance history

- bearings
  - rolling element, 2-5
  - sleeve, 2-36
- rotor, 5-6
- shaft, 4-5
- windings, 3-6

Mechanical clearance, 3-25

## Mechanical failures

- introduction to, 6-3
- lifting devices, 6-19
  - accessories, 6-21
  - operating personnel, 6-21
  - standards, 6-21
- miscellaneous mechanical failures, 6-32
- motor cooling system, 6-3
  - air deflectors, 6-8
    - damaged, 6-10
    - internal, 6-9
    - loose or noisy, 6-10
    - special considerations, 6-10
    - two-piece, 6-10
    - windings shorting to, 6-9
  - air ducts, 6-5
  - cooling fans, 6-6
  - fan positioning and direction of rotation, 6-8
  - unusual cooling systems, 6-6

- motor terminal box explosions, 6-14
    - cable supports, 6-16
    - insulated connections, 6-16
    - internal pressure rise due to faults, 6-15
      - example of, 6-15
      - large, 6-16
    - proper sealing and drainage, 6-16
    - recommendations, 6-16
    - bursting pressure, 6-15
  - motor terminal boxes, 6-14
  - mounting and alignment, 6-22
    - guide to, 6-31
    - magnetic centering effects on sleeve bearing induction motors, 6-24
    - overhung load problems, 6-26
    - problems associated with magnetic centering, 6-24
  - unique problems, 6-32
    - heat source considerations, 6-32
    - joints, 6-32
  - Mechanical stress
    - armatures, 7-4
    - bearings
      - rolling element, 2-23
      - sleeve, 2-44
    - field coils (shunt fields), 7-18
    - rotor, 5-17
    - shaft, 4-11
    - windings
      - damaged motor leads, 3-26
      - improper rotor-to-stator geometry (loss of air gap), 3-26
      - poor lugging of connections, 3-27
      - mechanical clearance, 3-25
      - miscellaneous, 3-27
      - winding movement, 3-24
  - Methodology
    - forms
      - appearance of motor and system, 1-8
      - application considerations, 1-9
      - inspection reports, 1-13
      - maintenance history, 1-10
      - motor system and environment checklist, 1-11
      - stator coil layout for location and identification of fault, 1-12
    - rolling element bearing failures, 2-4
    - root cause, 1-2
    - shaft failures, 4-4
    - sleeve bearing failures, 2-36
    - windings, summary of, 3-6
  - Misapplication of a motor, case study, 9-5
  - Miscellaneous stress, rotor, 5-35
  - Moisture, windings, 3-44
  - Motor and system, analysis of, 1-4
  - Motor stresses, see Stresses
  - Mounting and alignment, 6-22
    - guide to, 6-31
    - magnetic centering effects on sleeve bearing induction motors, 6-24
    - overhung load problems, 6-26
    - problems associated with magnetic centering, 6-24
- ## N
- Nomenclature
    - AC motors, 1-6
    - DC motors, 1-7
- ## O
- Oil, see Lubrication
  - Overloading, 3-11
- ## P
- Partial discharge (corona) and tracking, 3-19
- ## R
- Reference materials, 10-1
  - Residual stress
    - rotor, 5-33
    - shaft, 4-19
  - Rolling element bearings
    - fatigue process, 2-2
    - dynamic and static loading stress, 2-16
    - electrical stress, 2-25
    - environmental stress, 2-21
    - lubrication, 2-5
    - mechanical stress, 2-23
    - methodology for analyzing rolling element bearing failures, 2-4
    - tips for interpreting bearing failures, 2-4
    - thermal stress, 2-12
    - vertical motor bearing systems: special cases, 2-29
    - vibration and shock stress, 2-19
  - Root cause methodology, 1-2
  - Rotor
    - aluminum versus copper construction, 5-17
    - casting problems, 5-17
    - dynamic stress, 5-12
      - appearance, 5-12
      - centrifugal force (overspeed), 5-12
      - cyclic stress, 5-12
      - failure class, 5-12
-

environmental stress, 5-27  
 appearance, 5-27  
 failure class, 5-27

fabricated rotor dissymmetry, 5-19

introduction to, 5-3

magnetic stress, 5-28  
 appearance, 5-28  
 electromagnetic effect, 5-28  
 electromagnetic noise and vibration, 5-30  
 failure class, 5-28  
 unbalanced magnetic pull and rotor rub, 5-29

methodology for analyzing, 5-4  
 appearance considerations, 5-6  
 application considerations, 5-6  
 failure class, 5-4  
 failure pattern, 5-6  
 maintenance history, 5-6

mechanical stress, 5-17  
 aluminum versus copper construction, 5-17  
 appearance, 5-17  
 failure class, 5-17

miscellaneous stress, 5-35  
 appearance, 5-35  
 failure class, 5-35

residual stress, 5-33  
 appearance, 5-33  
 failure class, 5-33

rotor rub, unbalanced magnetic pull, 5-29

skew, impact of, 5-19

sparkling, 5-7

swaging of rotor bars, 5-19

tapered bore or rotor, 6-25

testing, special cases, 5-37

thermal stress, 5-7  
 appearance, 5-7  
 failure class, 5-7

## S

Scuff paper, 3-52

Series fields, 7-20

### Shaft

causes of failure, 4-6

dynamic and mechanical stress, 4-11

electromagnetic stress, 4-23

environmental stress, 4-14

fatigue process, defining the, 4-6  
 stress cycle (S-N) diagrams, 4-7  
 appearance, 4-7

introduction to shaft failures, 4-2

failure analysis sequence, 4-4

methodology for analysis, 4-4  
 appearance considerations, 4-4  
 application considerations, 4-5  
 failure mode, 4-4  
 failure pattern, 4-4  
 maintenance history, 4-5

motor shaft materials, 4-2

residual stress, 4-19

stress concentrations, impact of, 4-7  
 areas of highest concentration, 4-9  
 shaft keyways, 4-10

stresses acting on, 4-2

stress/strain curves, 4-3

thermal stress, 4-16

tools of shaft failure analysis, 4-3

Shaft currents and tachometers (DC), 7-27

Shaft keyways, 4-10

Shaft materials, 4-2

Sheaves/pulleys, 8-4

Shunt fields, see Field coils (shunt fields)

### Single phase

four cases where three-phase motors may run single-phased, 3-12

winding damage caused by, 3-12

Skew, rotor, 5-19

### Sleeve bearings

dynamic and static loading stress, 2-40

electrical stress, 2-47

environmental stress, 2-42

improperly modified spherical sleeve bearing, case study, 9-7

introduction to sleeve bearing failures, 2-35

mechanical stress, 2-44

methodology for analyzing sleeve bearing failures, 2-36

thermal stress, 2-37  
 babbitt grade, 2-38  
 some common causes of failure, 2-38

vibration and shock stress, 2-46

Slot bar marking: causes and cures, 7-7

Splashplate, 2-33

### Stator failures

analysis of, 3-4

appearance considerations, 3-6

application considerations, 3-6

cause and effect, the need to separate, 3-8  
 line and ground faults, 3-8  
 special thermal patterns, 3-9

introduction to, 3-4

failure modes, 3-4

failure patterns, 3-5

maintenance history, 3-6



- summary of, 3-6
    - symmetrical damage pattern with all phases
      - overheated, 3-6
    - symmetrical damage pattern with 1/3 or 2/3 of phases
      - overheated, 3-7
    - symmetrical damage pattern with 1/2 of phases
      - overheated, 3-7
    - asymmetrical damage pattern (winding is grounded), 3-8
    - asymmetrical damage pattern (excluding grounds), 3-8
  - Stator stresses
    - electrical stress, 3-18
      - dielectric aging, 3-18
      - insulation inadequacies and defects, 3-19
      - partial discharge (corona) and tracking, 3-19
      - transient voltages, 3-18
    - environmental stress, 3-44
      - abrasion, 3-44
      - chemical damage, 3-45
      - moisture, 3-44
      - poor ventilation, 3-44
    - mechanical stress, 3-24
      - damaged motor leads, 3-26
      - improper rotor-to-stator geometry (loss of air gap), 3-26
      - mechanical clearance, 3-25
      - miscellaneous, 3-27
      - poor lugging of connections, 3-27
      - winding movement, 3-24
    - thermal stress, 3-10
      - ambient, 3-12
      - circulating currents, 3-14
      - load cycling, starting and stalling, 3-13
      - overloading, 3-11
      - poor ventilation, 3-13
      - single phase, 3-12
      - thermal aging process, 3-10
      - voltage unbalance, 3-11
      - voltage variation, 3-11
  - Stress cycle (S-N) diagrams, 4-7
  - Stresses
    - acting on shafts, 4-2
    - summary of, 1-2
  - Stress/strain curves, 4-3
  - Surge capacitors and lightning arresters, 8-2
  - Swaging of rotor bars, 5-19
  - Symmetry, importance of in DC motors, 7-18
- T**
- Tachometer, see Shaft currents and tachometers
  - Tapered bore or rotor, 6-25
  - Terminal box explosions, 6-14
    - cable supports, 6-16
    - insulated connections, 6-16
    - internal pressure rise due to faults, 6-15
    - example of, 6-15
    - large terminal boxes, 6-16
    - proper sealing and drainage, 6-16
    - recommendations, 6-16
    - terminal box bursting pressure, 6-15
  - Terminal boxes, 6-14
  - Testing, special cases for rotors, 5-37
  - Thermal protection, 8-2
  - Thermal stress
    - armatures, 7-3
    - bearings
      - rolling element, 2-12
      - sleeve, 2-37
    - field coils (shunt fields), 7-17
    - rotor, 5-7
    - shaft, 4-16
    - windings, 3-10
  - Tilt pad bearings, 2-33
  - Transient voltages, 3-18
  - Treatment methods, 3-50
- V**
- Ventilation
    - DC motor, 7-25
    - windings, poor ventilation, 3-13, 3-44
  - Vertical motor bearings
    - bearing size and thrust rating, 2-31
    - design comparisons, 2-30
    - duplex pairs, mounting, 2-30
    - oil leaks, 2-32
    - special cases, 2-29
    - splashplate mounting, 2-33
    - tilt pad bearings, 2-33
  - Vibration and shock stress
    - rolling element bearings, 2-19
    - sleeve bearings, 2-46
  - Vibration sensors, 8-4
  - Voids, casting variations, 5-21
  - Voltage unbalance, 3-11
  - Voltage variation, 3-11
- W**
- Wear patterns, commutator, 7-8
  - Wedge material, 3-51
  - Winding connection failure, case study, 9-2

- Winding failures
  - analysis of, 3-4
  - appearance considerations, 3-6
  - application considerations, 3-6
  - cause and effect, the need to separate, 3-8
    - line and ground faults, 3-8
    - special thermal patterns, 3-9
  - introduction to, 3-4
  - failure modes, 3-4
  - failure patterns, 3-5
  - maintenance history, 3-6
  - summary of, 3-6
    - symmetrical damage pattern with all phases
      - overheated, 3-6
    - symmetrical damage pattern with 1/3 or 2/3 of phases
      - overheated, 3-7
    - symmetrical damage pattern with 1/2 of phases
      - overheated, 3-7
    - asymmetrical damage pattern (winding is grounded), 3-8
    - asymmetrical damage pattern (excluding grounds), 3-8
- Winding materials, 3-50
  - appearance offers clues, 3-51
  - inspect laminations, 3-51
  - location of failure offers important clue, 3-52
  - proper winding insulation, 3-51
  - properties of insulation materials, 3-50
  - scuff paper, 3-52
  - temperature, 3-50
  - treatment methods, 3-50
  - wedge material, 3-51
- Winding movement, 3-24
- Windings
  - electrical stress, 3-18
    - dielectric aging, 3-18
    - insulation inadequacies and defects, 3-19
    - partial discharge (corona) and tracking, 3-19
    - transient voltages, 3-18
  - environmental stress, 3-44
    - abrasion, 3-44
    - chemical damage, 3-45
    - moisture, 3-44
    - poor ventilation, 3-44
  - mechanical stress, 3-24
    - damaged motor leads, 3-26
    - improper rotor-to-stator geometry (loss of air gap), 3-26
    - mechanical clearance, 3-25
    - miscellaneous, 3-27
    - poor lugging of connections, 3-27
    - winding movement, 3-24
  - thermal stress, 3-10
    - ambient, 3-12
    - circulating currents, 3-14
    - load cycling, starting and stalling, 3-13
    - overloading, 3-11
    - poor ventilation, 3-13
    - single phase, 3-12
    - thermal aging process, 3-10
    - voltage unbalance, 3-11
    - voltage variation, 3-11