

Visible Preventative Management or TPM Check-sheet

It is more than you think ...

This one simple form contains so many treasures of changing and sustaining change in your organization. On the surface it looks like a simple checklist for auditing equipment completed daily by your assigned Team Member.

Of course that is a primary purpose but let look beyond the obvious to explore the hidden benefits. The form is designed into three categories 1) Customer Information 2) evaluation criteria 3) Audit Control

The image shows a grid-based form for equipment auditing. At the top, there are fields for 'EQUIPMENT CHECKER NAME', 'EQUIPMENT OPERATOR', and 'EQUIPMENT ID'. Below this is a large grid with 'ITEMS' listed in the first column. The grid is designed for daily checks, with columns for 'DATE', 'TIME', and 'STATUS' (likely OK, NG, etc.). The form is used to track the condition of various equipment items over time.

Abbreviated example of a typical VPM/TPM Sheer

At the top of the form we gather customer information by requesting the Team Member to provide their initials. This immediately creates an emotional connection between the Team Member and the equipment that they are about to check. We know that in order for any process to work effectively it must be assigned an owner ... an individual's name and not a department so creating that visible emotional connection.

Next in the evaluation area of the form we have a series of items that we would like to have checked on a regular basis. As we identify opportunities resulting from "Disturbance to Flow" we should be constantly adding items to the list by asking the Team Member "What could we have checked that could have prevented this incident?" Over time, the form assists in the early detection of potential problems. The checklist items can go beyond the traditional mechanical items to include replenishment of consumable inventory items or even 5S attributes.

Where Lean Thoughts can become Reality

"Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow."

Ronald. E. Osborn

Visible Preventable Management

Filling out the form is a simple process ... a checkmark if the item is in conformance and an "X" if the item is non-conforming. A non-conforming item can be notified to the supervisor, place as an open issue on the report-out board or have a maintenance requisition submitted.

Typically, I hang a log sheet close to the VPM sheet. The log sheet contains the normal type of columns, date, initiator, confirmation, due date ... but we have a special column where we ask the initiator to sign off on a line item to indicate that they are satisfied with the results. The initiator is the customer and we want to insure customer satisfaction. The log sheet also acts a histogram for the equipment or area and if we see reoccurring items begin to appear on the list ... this is a good indicator that we need to initiate a redesign for a more robust process to be implemented.

Now for the fun part ... the audit section of the form. A subtle but very powerful tool in the Toyota Production System is the use of name stamps .. simple, small, inexpensive ... but very powerful. Simple rule of thumb ... what you read you stamp leaving your legacy behind for others to see.

You will see a row for maintenance to place their stamps on the form ... this is how you begin to convert your maintenance technicians from reactive to proactive or preventative maintenance. You assign the techs to conduct several audits each day. During the audit the tech should instruct the Team Member to physically show the technician how he checks each item and where it is located on the equipment. Special Note, do allow the team member to explain the checking method to the technician or the power of training and learning will be lost.

In the management section begin to train all the members of the management team to stamp the sheet whenever they stop in the area ... this means all management folks Team Leaders, Supervisors, General Managers, Directors, Presidents. When management takes the time to stamp a form it indicates commitment to the team member but more important that management was on the shop floor looking at information and listening to the voice of the customer.

Was the machine checked on a daily basis
 Were audits conducted by maintenance ... how many and by whom
 Did a supervisor or management team member visit machines ... which ones and how frequent?

In summary this form will provide you with several key pieces of information to indicate if your operation is running as you intend it. You will know if the equipment is checked on a daily basis by your team members. Audits conducted by maintenance techs will become learning exercises as team members become more familiarized with their equipment and they may even adopt certain minor maintenance tasks such as filling fluid levels or lubing the machine. The best is the management review ... are supervisors visiting all of the machines on a regular basis ... so we know that they are speaking to all of our team members on a regular basis or if they are constantly visiting one machine ... this may be a problem or opportunity that requires additional attention.

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 A very simple but powerful socio-tech tool to enhance your operation.

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