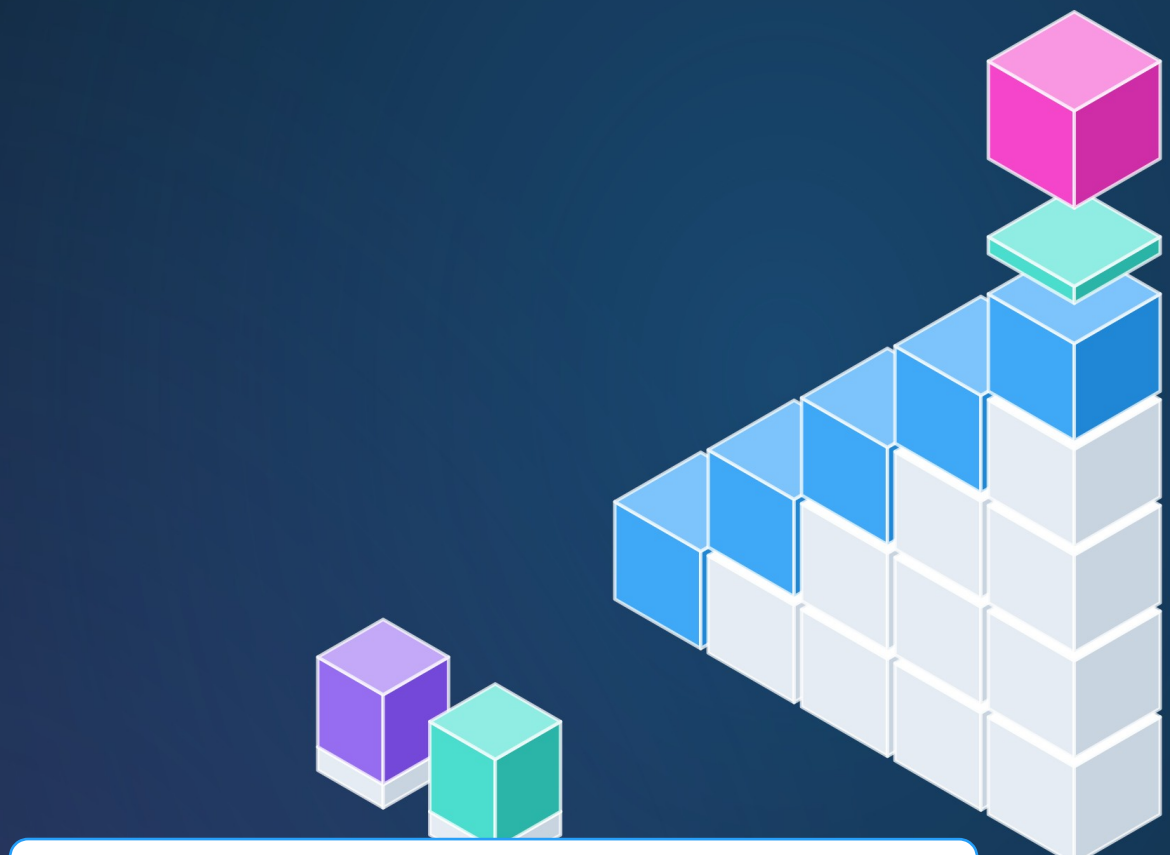
OPERATIONS INSIDER

LEAN · OPERATIONS · LEADERSHIP

IMPROVEMENT KATA AND COACHING KATA QUICK START CHECKLIST

Score the improvement routine of one process in one hour, with a record you can point at.



AIM. MEASURE. EXPERIMENT. COACH.

START HERE

How to Use This Check

One process, one hour with the person who owns it and the manager above them, twenty-five statements, one number.

01 LOOK	02 SCORE	03 ACT
Go to the process and open what is actually written: the challenge, the measured current condition, the target condition, the obstacle list and the record of the last experiments.	Score each statement from 0 to 4. Where nothing written can be pointed at, the score is 2 or lower.	Take the weakest block and agree one action with an owner and a date before you leave the process.

The Scoring Scale

POINTS	MEANING
0	Not in place.
1	Happens occasionally, depends on individuals.
2	Partly in place, not held through a normal week.
3	Mostly in place and visible in the record.
4	Consistently in place, visible, counted and improved.

> **WHY A ROUTINE AND NOT A PROGRAM**
>
> **Action lists and workshops produce a burst of improvement and then go quiet, because nobody practices anything. A routine that two people run every day at the process keeps producing small steps long after the enthusiasm is gone.**

Before You Start

- **Scope:** one process with a measurable output and a named owner, not a department and not a project.
- **Evidence:** the written challenge, the measured current condition, the current target condition with its date, the obstacle list and the last five experiments.
- **Tone:** you check whether the routine is practiced, not whether people are clever. Ask to see the record, not for an explanation.

THE CHECK

01 Direction and Challenge

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
01	A written challenge exists for the pilot process, with a measure, a figure and a date one to three years out.	
02	The challenge can be traced in one line to a goal of the annual plan, and the process owner can name that line.	
03	The challenge names a condition of the process, not only a result figure such as cost, output or delivery.	
04	Everybody who works in the process has seen the challenge, and it is posted at the process.	
05	The challenge is reviewed once a year against the plant goals and changed only with a written reason.	

02 The Current Condition

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
06	The current condition of the pilot process is described with measured values, not with impressions.	
07	The measurement covers enough cycles or days to show the variation, not only an average.	
08	The pattern behind the variation is known: which station, which variant, which shift, which hour.	
09	The result measure and the process measure behind it are both written down, with the source of each.	
10	The current condition is measured again with fresh data before the next target condition is set.	

THE CHECK

03 The Next Target Condition

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
11	A written target condition exists for the pilot process, with a date no more than six weeks away.	
12	The target condition describes how the process works, not only the result it is expected to deliver.	
13	The target condition has one measure with a figure that can be read at the process in minutes.	
14	The learner can say the target condition and its date from memory, without reading it from a sheet.	
15	The target condition was set by the learner and the coach together, not handed down as a task.	

04 Experiments and Obstacles

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
16	An obstacle list belongs to the current target condition, and items are added as they appear.	
17	Each experiment tests one change and one assumption, and the record states the change in one sentence.	
18	The expected result is written down before the experiment runs, with its measure and its figure.	
19	The actual result and what was learned are written down the same day, including a result that disappoints.	
20	Three working days or less pass between two experiments on the pilot process.	

THE CHECK

05 Coaching and Practice

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
21	Learner and coach meet at the process every working day for a conversation of 15 to 25 minutes.	
22	The coach follows the same sequence of questions every time and does not supply the solution.	
23	A record at the process carries target condition, current condition, obstacles and experiments, written by the learner.	
24	A second coach listens to the conversation at least weekly and gives feedback on the questions, not on the process.	
25	Conversations held, experiments run and target conditions reached are counted and reviewed every month.	

Your Result

BLOCK	POINTS	OUT OF
01 Direction and Challenge		20
02 The Current Condition		20
03 The Next Target Condition		20
04 Experiments and Obstacles		20
05 Coaching and Practice		20
TOTAL		100

YOUR RESULT

Read the Number

The total says how much of your improvement is practiced. The weakest block says where the next week starts.

TOTAL	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT TO DO FIRST
0 to 39	Untrained. Improvement lives in action lists and events and stops when they end.	Choose one process and one learner. Measure the current condition and write it down.
40 to 59	Trying. A target condition exists, but the conversation and the experiments happen when there is time.	Fix the conversation to a time and a place. One experiment every three days.
60 to 79	Practicing. The routine runs on one process, the record is current, the coach asks instead of answering.	Add the second coach and the second learner. Start counting the practice.
80 to 100	Routine. Several pairs practice, target conditions are reached by their date, the challenge moves.	Hold the cadence, take the routine to the next area, review the challenge.

Your Three Priorities

NO.	WHAT TO IMPROVE	FIRST ACTION	OWNER	DUE

THE RULE FOR EVERY ACTION

Owner and date, or it did not happen. Repeat the check after three months and compare the blocks.

What to Do Next

NEXT STEP	WHAT YOU GET
IMPROVEMENT KATA STARTER KIT	The first 30 days on one process, with the Excel log for current condition, target condition and experiments.
IMPROVEMENT KATA EXCELLENCE BUNDLE	Playbook, two-day workshop pack, six templates, the Excel system and the workshop deck.

Both are available at operationsinsider.com.