OPERATIONS INSIDER

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THE MANAGER'S LAUNCH MANAGEMENT QUICK START CHECKLIST

Score one launch in twenty minutes, with evidence you can point at.



FIND THE PROBLEM IN THE TRIAL RUN.

START HERE

How to Use This Check

One launch, one walk, the people who run it. Twenty minutes, twenty-five statements, one number.

01 WALK	02 SCORE	03 ACT
Go to the line where the product will run, with the launch manager and two workstream leads. Do not score from a meeting room.	Score each statement from 0 to 4. Without something you can point at, the score is 2 or lower.	Pick the weakest block and agree one action with an owner and a date before you leave.

The Scoring Scale

POINTS	MEANING
0	Not in place.
1	Happens occasionally, depends on individuals.
2	Partly in place, not consistent across workstreams.
3	Mostly in place and visible in the launch file and at the line.
4	Consistently in place, visible, reviewed and improved from launch to launch.

> WHY ONE LAUNCH
>
> **A plant does not have one launch level. Each launch does. Score the launch that is next to its start of production and repeat the check before every gate.**

Before You Start

- **Launch:** choose a launch between process release and the end of ramp-up. Earlier there is too little to see.
- **Evidence:** the gate checklist, the issue list, the ramp-up chart, the training record. If nobody can show it, it does not count.
- **Safety:** equipment under installation can start without warning. Stay outside fenced areas and follow the site rules.

THE CHECK

01 Phases and Gates

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
01	The launch has written phases from release to stable series production, and every gate has entry and exit criteria on one page.	
02	A gate is passed only when every exit criterion is met, or each open criterion has an owner, a date and the signature of the sponsor.	
03	Gate dates sit in one master plan that shows the critical path back from the start of production.	
04	Gate reviews take place at the line or in the pilot area, and evidence is shown there, not only on slides.	
05	Each workstream has a target workstream level for the next gate, and the actual level is checked at the gate review.	

02 Team, Status and Issues

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
06	A launch manager is named with written authority and at least half of the working time for this launch.	
07	Production, quality, logistics, maintenance, engineering, people and suppliers each have one named workstream lead.	
08	Status is reported every week with one traffic light per workstream, and every amber or red light has a written reason and a next step.	
09	Every open issue has an owner, a priority and a due date, and the review starts with the oldest open issues.	
10	Issues that pass their ageing limit are escalated by rule to the launch manager or the sponsor, not by mood.	

THE CHECK

03 Readiness

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
11	Operators and team leaders are trained on the new standards and released before the first pre-series run.	
12	Standard work, inspection plans and reaction plans exist for every station before the first pre-series run.	
13	Equipment is accepted against written criteria, including capability on critical features, a maintenance plan and spare parts.	
14	Every part number has a released source, agreed packaging, a supply route to the line and stock for the pre-series.	
15	Critical suppliers have passed a readiness check and have run a trial at the planned rate.	

04 Trial Runs and Ramp-Up

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
16	Every pre-series and trial run has a plan with quantity, rate, people and the question it has to answer.	
17	Each trial run ends with a written result: output, first pass yield, issues raised and a decision.	
18	A ramp-up curve with planned output and planned first pass yield per week is agreed with production, logistics and sales.	
19	Actual output and first pass yield are recorded per shift from the first day and plotted against the plan at the line.	
20	The exit from ramp-up is defined in numbers, and the line is handed over to the series organisation in a formal review.	

THE CHECK

05 Learning and Data

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
21	Lessons are recorded during the launch, each with a cause and a proposed change to a standard, a checklist or a gate criterion.	
22	The kickoff of every launch reviews the lessons of the previous launches and shows which changes were made.	
23	Output, stops and first pass yield are captured digitally from the first pre-series run, with one written definition.	
24	Simulation and digital models are used only where a written question and an expected payback justify them.	
25	Ninety days after handover a review checks whether the launch targets held and closes the launch file.	

Your Result

BLOCK	POINTS	OUT OF
01 Phases and Gates		20
02 Team, Status and Issues		20
03 Readiness		20
04 Trial Runs and Ramp-Up		20
05 Learning and Data		20
TOTAL		100

YOUR RESULT

Read the Number

The total tells you how much the launch depends on luck. The weakest block tells you where to start.

TOTAL	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT TO DO FIRST
0 to 39	Improvised. The launch runs on heroes, overtime and late surprises.	Write the gates with exit criteria. Name one lead per workstream. Start an issue list with owners.
40 to 59	Planned. A plan exists, but readiness is reported, not checked.	Hold gate reviews at the line with evidence. Agree the ramp-up curve in numbers.
60 to 79	Controlled. Gates, issues and ramp-up are tracked and acted on.	Add workstream levels. Escalate by ageing rule. Check suppliers at rate.
80 to 100	Repeatable. Every launch starts from the lessons of the last one.	Hold the level. Turn the lessons into checklist items for the next launch.

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 before the next gate and compare the blocks, not the feeling.

What to Do Next

NEXT STEP	WHAT YOU GET
LAUNCH MANAGEMENT STARTER KIT	The guide for running one launch through its last gates, plus the ramp-up and issue tracker in Excel.
LAUNCH MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE BUNDLE	The full playbook, workshop pack, shop floor forms, the Excel system for several launches and a ready-to-use workshop deck.

Both are available at operationsinsider.com.