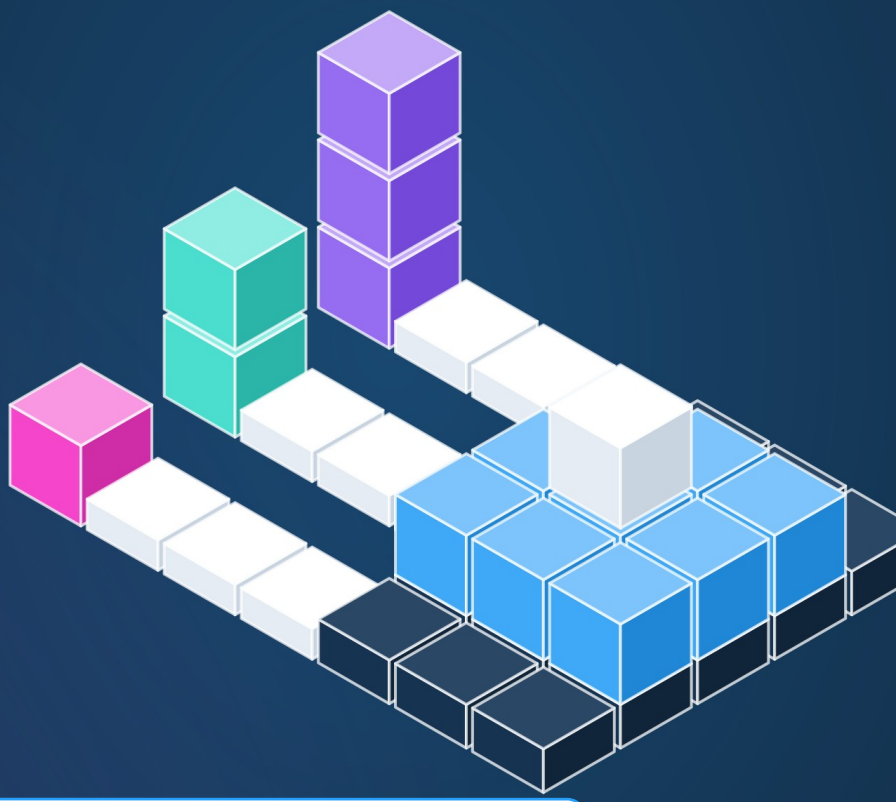
OPERATIONS INSIDER

LEAN · OPERATIONS · LEADERSHIP

THE MANAGER'S SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT QUICK START CHECKLIST

Score your supply base in one hour, with evidence you can point at.



SEE. MEASURE. DEVELOP. PROTECT.

START HERE

How to Use This Check

One category or one plant, one hour with purchasing and quality, twenty-five statements, one number.

01 LOOK	02 SCORE	03 ACT
Sit with the people who run the supply base and open the real documents: spend data, scorecards, audit reports, complaints, contracts. Do not score from memory.	Score each statement from 0 to 4. Without a document, a dashboard or a record 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 categories.
3	Mostly in place and visible in data.
4	Consistently in place, visible, reviewed and improved.

> **WHY PURCHASING ALONE CANNOT SCORE THIS**
>
> **Supplier management is shared work. Purchasing negotiates, quality approves and solves problems, logistics measures delivery, engineering sets the specification. Score together, or the result tells you only how one department sees itself.**

Before You Start

- **Scope:** one plant or one category with at least twenty active suppliers of production material.
- **Evidence:** the spend report of the last twelve months, the supplier list with segments, the last scorecards, open complaints, audit reports and quality agreements.
- **Tone:** you check the system, not the buyer. Ask how a supplier was chosen, not who chose it.

THE CHECK

01 Strategy and Segmentation

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
01	The spend is analyzed by supplier and category at least once a year, and the suppliers with 80 percent of the volume are known by name.	
02	Every category has a written strategy with the number of suppliers, the sourcing model and the target for the next three years.	
03	Suppliers are segmented by value and supply risk, and each segment has its own rules for contact, review and development.	
04	Make or buy decisions are made with a documented comparison of cost, capability, capacity and risk.	
05	Purchasing, quality, logistics and engineering agree the category strategy together and review it once a year.	

02 Selection and Approval

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
06	New suppliers are selected with a weighted evaluation matrix that covers quality, delivery, cost, capability and risk, not price alone.	
07	No supplier delivers series parts before a documented approval, including a process audit for critical parts.	
08	New parts go through a defined launch: initial samples, capability evidence, a run at rate at the supplier and a written part approval.	
09	Quality, logistics and conduct requirements are agreed in writing before the first series order.	
10	Specifications and drawings sent to suppliers are complete, released and under change control.	

THE CHECK

03 Performance and Scorecard

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
11	Every key supplier is measured monthly on quality in ppm, on-time in-full delivery, cost and collaboration with one scorecard.	
12	Targets and weights of the scorecard are written down and known to the suppliers.	
13	Strategic suppliers have a performance review at least every quarter, with data, decisions and actions with owners.	
14	Suppliers below the threshold enter a defined escalation path with clear steps and dates.	
15	Supplier performance is visible to purchasing, quality and production on one shared dashboard.	

04 Development and Problem Solving

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
16	Every complaint to a supplier triggers containment within 24 hours and a structured root cause analysis such as 8D.	
17	Root causes are verified and the effectiveness of supplier actions is checked with data before a complaint is closed.	
18	Weak suppliers with high strategic value get a development plan with targets, support and a time frame instead of only pressure.	
19	Lean methods such as value stream mapping, standard work and setup reduction are applied jointly at key suppliers.	
20	Good suppliers are recognized, and improvement ideas from suppliers have a channel and an answer.	

THE CHECK

05 Risk, Cost and Sustainability

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
21	Supply risks are assessed per part and supplier, and single source parts with high impact have a written mitigation.	
22	Sourcing decisions compare the total cost of ownership, not only the unit price.	
23	Cost reductions are developed with suppliers through should-cost analysis and joint improvement, not only through price pressure.	
24	Key suppliers have agreed a code of conduct, and environmental and social data are requested and checked for the main categories.	
25	Early warning signals such as financial distress, capacity limits and regional disruptions are monitored for critical suppliers.	

Your Result

BLOCK	POINTS	OUT OF
01 Strategy and Segmentation		20
02 Selection and Approval		20
03 Performance and Scorecard		20
04 Development and Problem Solving		20
05 Risk, Cost and Sustainability		20
TOTAL		100

YOUR RESULT

Read the Number

The total tells you whether you manage suppliers or only order from them. The weakest block tells you where to start.

TOTAL	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT TO DO FIRST
0 to 39	Ordering. Suppliers are chosen by price and noticed when they fail.	Analyze the spend, name the top suppliers, start one scorecard for them.
40 to 59	Measuring. Data exists, but reviews are rare and problems come back.	Run quarterly reviews with the top ten. Introduce 8D with deadlines.
60 to 79	Managing. Segments, scorecards and approvals work, risk and cost are reactive.	Map single source risks. Use total cost of ownership in every sourcing decision.
80 to 100	Partnering. The supply base is developed as a part of your own production system.	Hold the level. Develop key suppliers with lean methods and share the gains.

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 in six months and compare the blocks, not the feeling.

What to Do Next

NEXT STEP	WHAT YOU GET
SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT STARTER KIT	The guide for the first 30 days, plus the supplier scorecard workbook with segmentation, monthly scores, complaints and actions.
SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE BUNDLE	The full playbook, a two-day workshop pack, eight templates from audit to TCO, the complete Excel system and a ready-to-use workshop deck.

Both are available at operationsinsider.com.