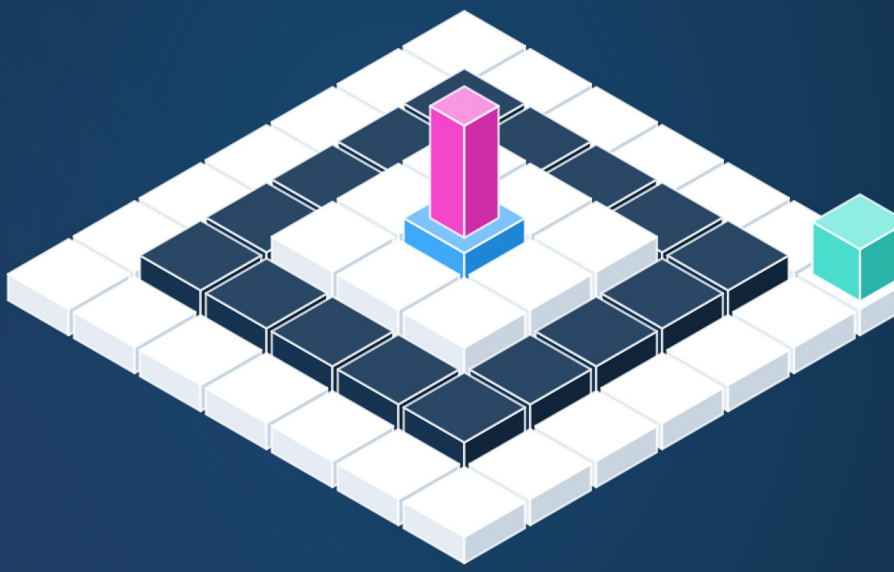
OPERATIONS INSIDER

LEAN · OPERATIONS · LEADERSHIP

THE MANAGER'S ZERO DEFECTS QUICK START CHECKLIST

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



DO NOT ACCEPT. DO NOT MAKE. DO NOT PASS ON.

START HERE

How to Use This Check

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

01 WALK	02 SCORE	03 ACT
Go to the line with the team leader and the quality engineer. Do not score from a desk or a report.	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 shifts.
3	Mostly in place and visible at the line.
4	Consistently in place, visible, reviewed and improved.

> **WHY ONE LINE**
>
> **A plant does not have a quality level. A line does. Score the line with the most complaints or the most scrap, and repeat the check there every quarter.**

Before You Start

- **Line:** choose the line with the highest scrap cost or the last customer complaint.
- **Evidence:** the red container, the alarm log, the first part record, the gauge label. If it is not at the line, it does not count.
- **Ask to be shown:** let an operator show you the self-inspection and an error proofing check. Do not accept a description.

THE CHECK

01 Built-in Quality

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
01	The critical characteristics of the product are listed at each station, with limits, check method and frequency.	
02	Operators inspect their own work against a visual standard with limit samples and record the result at the station.	
03	A defective part received from the previous station is returned with a tag, not reworked quietly.	
04	Defective parts go into a red container at the station within one minute and are never left in the flow.	
05	First pass yield and ppm of the line are calculated daily with one written definition, and the top three defects are visible at the line.	

02 Quality Alarm, Start-Up and Containment

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
06	Written triggers define when a quality alarm is raised, and every operator can name them without looking.	
07	The team leader is at the station within three minutes of an alarm, and every response is logged with times.	
08	The rules for stopping the line are written, and nobody is blamed for stopping on a valid trigger.	
09	Every start, changeover and restart is released by a recorded first part check before the series continues.	
10	Containment starts within one hour: suspect parts in process, in stock and in transit are found, blocked and counted.	

THE CHECK

03 Error Proofing

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
11	Each of the ten most frequent defects has an error proofing assessment: prevent, detect or not yet possible.	
12	Every error proofing device is in one register with the defect it stops, its type and a verification interval.	
13	Devices are verified at the start of each shift with a reference part, and the result is recorded at the station.	
14	A failed or bypassed device triggers a quality alarm and a written alternative check until it works again.	
15	For every new countermeasure, prevention at the source was considered before detection, and the decision is recorded.	

04 Problem Solving and Complaints

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
16	Every customer complaint is acknowledged within 24 hours and contained within 48 hours, with the times recorded.	
17	Defects above an agreed threshold get a structured eight-step analysis with a named owner and a team.	
18	The analysis finds the cause for why the defect was made and for why it escaped, and both are proven at the process.	
19	Every closed problem has an effectiveness check with data after an agreed period, usually 30 to 90 days.	
20	Lessons are transferred to similar lines, products and the planning of new ones, and the transfer is recorded.	

THE CHECK

05 Measurement, Suppliers and Digital Inspection

NO.	CHECK	SCORE 0 TO 4
21	Every gauge for a critical characteristic is calibrated, and a measurement system study shows it can tell good from bad.	
22	Suppliers of critical parts have written quality targets, and their ppm and complaints are reviewed at least quarterly.	
23	Every supplier defect found in the plant is recorded and reported to the supplier within one working day.	
24	Camera and AI inspection is validated with known good and bad parts, rejects are reviewed by a person, and the false reject rate is tracked.	
25	For every finished unit, the batches of critical parts and the key process data can be found within one hour.	

Your Result

BLOCK	POINTS	OUT OF
01 Built-in Quality		20
02 Quality Alarm, Start-Up and Containment		20
03 Error Proofing		20
04 Problem Solving and Complaints		20
05 Measurement, Suppliers and Digital Inspection		20
TOTAL		100

YOUR RESULT

Read the Number

The total tells you where the line stands. The weakest block tells you where to start.

TOTAL	WHAT IT MEANS	WHAT TO DO FIRST
0 to 39	Inspecting. Quality is sorted at the end, and the customer finds the rest.	Count defects by type every day. Put a red container at every station.
40 to 59	Reacting. Defects are found inside the plant, but the same ones return.	Write the alarm triggers. Analyse the top defect with two lines of five whys.
60 to 79	Controlling. Defects are stopped at the station and causes are removed.	Build the error proofing register. Verify every device on every shift.
80 to 100	Preventing. Defects are designed out and lessons reach new products.	Hold the level. Transfer the standards to the next line.

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 on the same line in 90 days and compare the blocks, not the feeling.

What to Do Next

NEXT STEP	WHAT YOU GET
ZERO DEFECTS STARTER KIT	The guide for your first 30 days on one line, plus the defect and first pass yield tracker in Excel.
ZERO DEFECTS EXCELLENCE BUNDLE	The full playbook, workshop pack, shop floor forms, the Excel system and a ready-to-use workshop deck.

Both are available at operationsinsider.com.