

# Tool Box Talk – How Does a Maintenance Manager Evaluate the Maintenance Storeroom?



## What is a maintenance storeroom?

A maintenance storeroom is a storage area for maintenance parts, repair parts, and operating supplies (known as MRO). It stores parts and supplies for future use to avoid prolonged downtime, which leads to a plant shutdown.

## Guiding Principles of the Maintenance Storeroom

There are 5 guiding principles for the maintenance storeroom:

1. Store only parts that have a link to an asset or piece of equipment, with the exception of operating supplies.
2. Promote physical security for your parts; treat them as you would a checkbook.
3. Staff your storeroom for the same hours as production operations.
4. Ensure that each part number is assigned a Min/Max that is reviewed regularly.
5. Measure your storeroom performance.

## What are the indicators of a poorly run storeroom?

- Housekeeping is one of the first indicators of how a storeroom is running. If the aisles are cluttered or disorganized, stock in the bins is not rotated to allow First In First Out (FIFO), and packages are torn or show leakages, it indicates that storage and care is not happening.
- If you are having stock outs on a recurring basis and stock is still showing in inventory, it is an indication of poor inventory management.
- If you are experiencing expedites for material already on order, it is an indication that either the suppliers are not meeting their due dates or the buyers are not paying attention to your needs.

## What is the best way to be proactive and evaluate your storeroom?

The best way to evaluate your storeroom is to walk through it daily and review the list of items below:

- Check 10 part numbers and count them. What is the variance from the system on-hand balance?
- In order management, how many orders are able to be filled and meet the daily requirements? Review the orders produced from the day before and note the number of shortages.
- Look at your kitting staging area. Are the kits being filled daily and rotating daily, or are they lingering for a week or more.
- Do you notice non-authorized persons in your storeroom looking at stock, shopping, or filling their own orders? What are your in/out controls and how are they working for you?
- Finally, ask your storeroom if they have any issues with suppliers or buyer response. The answers may surprise you.

## How do you apply Lean DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control) to your storeroom?

- **Define** your standard operating procedures by mapping your work processes.
- **Measure** your KPIs on daily, weekly, and monthly performance.
- **Analyze** the results.
- Set up a team to review the results and **Improve** upon them.
- Be sure to **Control** the activities in a manner that sequences events.