Seven Causes of Bad Work Order Data That Distort Maintenance Metrics

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Over the past 30 years, I have seen very few companies that truly take action to ensure work order data is input every time and reported accurately. This paper is all about this issue.
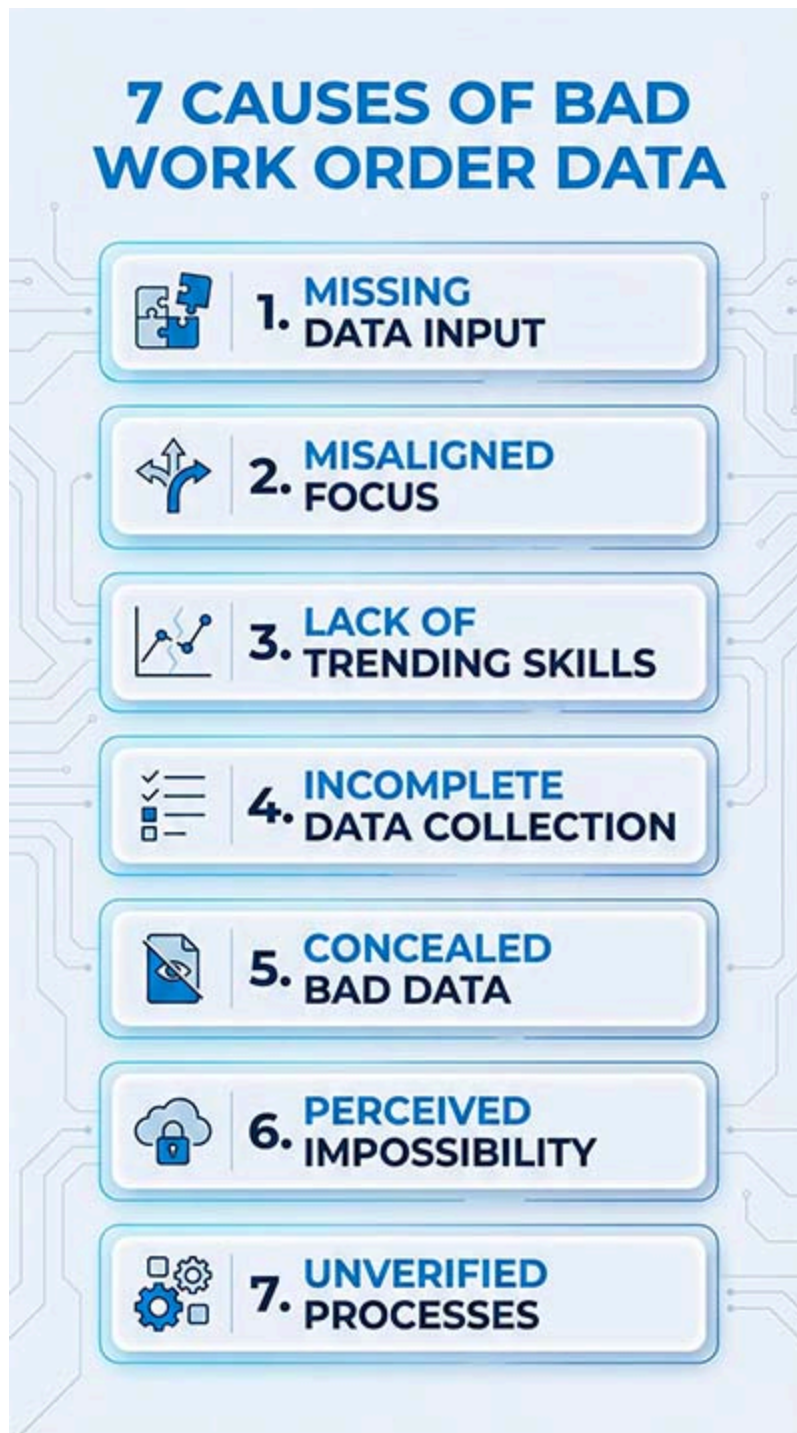
If metrics and Key Performance Indicators are so important, where are people pulling the data from if their work orders don't have the correct data on them when they are closed into that dark hole called the CMMS or EAM?

> When work order data is wrong or missing, maintenance metrics don't guide you – they mislead you.

Without good data, you are lost and making decisions based on passion rather than facts. Think about this: "If you were suddenly thrown out the back of an aircraft at 20,000 ft, would you know where you are?" Unless you had a GPS, you would be lost. Most companies have this same problem. They do not know where they are or how to reach the destination they intended to go.

If you had three days to get to Washington, DC, but had no idea where you were or which direction to take, admit it: you would never arrive on time or even at the correct location. In maintenance, we are the same way. Without good data, we are lost.

Let's look at the reasons people do not input the data so reports can be generated to tell us where we are, what the making process is, and when we arrive at our destination.

7 CAUSES OF BAD WORK ORDER DATA

1. MISSING DATA INPUT
2. MISALIGNED FOCUS
3. LACK OF TRENDING SKILLS
4. INCOMPLETE DATA COLLECTION
5. CONCEALED BAD DATA
6. PERCEIVED IMPOSSIBILITY
7. UNVERIFIED PROCESSES

The Seven Reasons Why Work Orders Are Not Closed Accurately

Reason #1: Missing Data Input

No one inputs the data into the CMMS/EAM for reports. I always ask the question, " Who is in charge? I guess no one or everyone. Let's establish a process, follow it, and measure it.

Solution: Begin by identifying 2-3 metrics with a group of maintenance team members. Identify the CMMS or EAM inputs that provide the data for the requested metrics. Train everyone who enters data and explain why the data is so important. A Standard Operating Procedure would be a great way to begin.

Reason #2: Misaligned Focus

No one cares about the data; all they want to do is report the data the corporation wants, such as PM Compliance, Schedule Compliance, Uptime, Downtime, etc.

Solution: Begin measuring the data you need to manage, such as PM Compliance, % of Planned Work, Schedule Compliance, Rework, and Maintenance Cost.

Never make a negative remark about any data, even if it is bad. "The data is the data". We want to focus our energy on improving the process so the data shows an increase in performance. It is like on a football team, no one would care to play very well if they had no data or scoreboard.

Give your people a scoreboard, let them spread rumors about themselves for a week, then tell them what the data says and ask for recommendations to improve the data. Never beat up anyone for insufficient data, or you will get great data from now on; however, nothing changes. The problems still exist.

Reason #3: Lack of Trending Skills

No one knows how to trend data, so they are afraid to show data ineffectively.

Solution: If you do not know how to trend specific data, then ask an expert. Never allow this issue to hold you back. Do your research; send me an email, read a book, anything, but move forward with data collection and metric dissemination.

Reason #4: Incomplete Data Collection

You cannot collect all the required data.

Solution: Make accurate data collection a requirement and hold people accountable. Develop a RACI chart that defines the roles and responsibilities of specific people. Trend the data on a line graph by day over one year.

Reason #5: Concealed Bad Data

You know the data is insufficient, so why show it to everyone?

Solution: I wish I had a dollar for every time someone made that statement, and I would be a rich man. People will do what you inspire them to do and what you want them to measure. If you have one bad apple, get rid of it. Do not allow one bad apple to spoil the crop.

Reason #6: Perceived Impossibility

Getting accurate data is impossible.

Solution: Identify key people who influence others. Get them on your side and make them a part of your KPI Development Team. When you report the data, talk to people and explain what the data is doing and why. Most of the time, you will get false until everyone gets engaged.

Reasons #7: Unverified Process

Our data verifies the current state of Maintenance and Reliability Processes.

Solution: All completed work orders must be reviewed by the Maintenance Supervisor and closed out by the Maintenance Planner

Source of this solution: Alumax Mt Holly (World Class Maintenance Model)

Author

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Ricky Smith, CMRP, CMRT is the Vice President of World Class Maintenance and a leading Maintenance Reliability Consultant with over 35 years of experience. He holds certifications such as Certified Maintenance and Reliability Professional (CMRP) and Certified Maintenance and Reliability Technician (CMRT). Ricky has worked with global companies like Coca-Cola, Honda, and Georgia Pacific, delivering expert maintenance solutions across 30 countries. His career began in the U.S. Army, advancing to leadership roles, including a position at the Pentagon as Facility Investigator for the Secretary of Defense. Ricky is also the co-author of *Rules of Thumb for Maintenance and Reliability Engineers* and *Lean Maintenance: Reduce Costs, Improve Quality, and Increase Market Share.*

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