

## PM Optimization Tip

Optimized common sense maintenance in a slowing economy, is there such a thing?

Times are tough, cut backs are prevalent and pressure is mounting. If you mention “Common Sense”, ‘Optimize’ and ‘Maintenance’ together, then there’s usually some reference to consultants and budgets. The truth is you don’t need to spend a lot of money on expensive software and you surely don’t need to invest lots of your time in getting a program moving.

It is time to simplify, get back to basics and familiarize yourself with what we like to call ‘common sense maintenance’.

**Random and Sudden Failures** – These won’t be prevented by maintenance

- Equipment that changes from operational to functional failure quickly and you don’t know when it will happen. So you need to consider the risk and likelihood of it happening as well as spares and skills required to get it back on line. These types of failures cause a breakdown almost every time.

**Random and Predictable Failures** – Condition based maintenance

- If you don’t know when the equipment item will fail and it gives lots of consistent indicators before it happens, you can consider condition checks. Be sure that the frequency of inspection is shorter than the time between the indication and functional failure. Beware! Over inspection may introduce complacency or add unnecessary cost. Determining the right frequency is done by asking the right people questions about the rate of decay.

**Known Safe Life** – Hard time maintenance

- If you know when the equipment will fail, just fix it before it does.

**Hidden Failures** – Normally associated with protective devices

- If an item could fail and you won’t know about it until an unrelated event happens (i.e. a high trip switch seizes), we call these Hidden Failures. You might need to go failure finding (or testing). How often you test is all about the risks and likelihood. More frequent testing means less risk of multiple failures. Beware! Sometimes the testing can introduce more potential failures than it manages, so it needs to be balanced.

Now consider the following.

- Look for low or no cost opportunities by talking to your colleagues. Operators, Trades people and Supervisors are fantastic resources.
- Pick one equipment item, print out the PM’s/ check lists. Walk to the equipment and while you’re thinking about the basics, with a bold marker, check off what’s good and what’s not. You’ll find tasks that are vague or poorly written, tasks directed at equipment/components that do not exist, equipment/components that are missing tasks and some tasks that are just a waste of time. You may even find some problems that can be fixed with little or no investment. The next step is to get the changes approved and implemented.
- Try to direct your PM’s at root causes and not consequences. This can save lots of time.
- Take one step at a time. Focus on implementation.

1hr a week is all that you need to kick off a reliability improvement program and add value to your company and your position, but you need to stick to it, follow up and communicate.

Opportunities are everywhere. Putting yourself out there and taking action, is sometimes the hard part.

Tip Provided by **OMCS International**

You can find more low cost tips and info at our website. There’s a free online tutorial, tools to help clean up your maintenance program and keep track of all of those opportunities you just found.

[www.reliabilityassurance.com](http://www.reliabilityassurance.com)