Equipment Downtime Prevention Cheat Sheet

A Tool for Increasing Productivity in Manufacturing

AkitaBox

Many manufacturing professionals will agree that unplanned downtime can be a serious threat to productivity. Faulty machinery and equipment can lead to loss of production and can greatly affect your organization's bottom line.

The key to avoiding unplanned downtime is to ensure that equipment is well-maintained through the help of a strong inspections and maintenance program. This cheat sheet will help your organization take the necessary steps to increase productivity, avoid unplanned downtime and keep equipment running at its best.

CHEAT #1 *Establish and implement realistic production goals.*

Production speed is important in a manufacturing plant, but it can also be a balancing act. Production lines that run too slowly run the risk of missing quotas, while lines that run too quickly run the risk of excessive mechanical wear-and-tear. Be realistic when planning production-specific goals, since lofty goals that push equipment to its maximum capacity each day can lead to a higher likelihood of unplanned downtime.

CHEAT #2 *Conduct an efficiency evaluation of plant operations.*

Is your plant's production process being impeded by outside factors, such as another department or unrelated part of the plant? Find the answer to this question and more with an efficiency evaluation. Insight from this type of audit will reveal how plant management teams can improve productivity, reduce downtime and ensure that all departments (and processes) are working together in harmony.

CHEAT #3 *Provide regular safety training to reduce dangerous user error.*

User error is one of the top causes of downtime on a production line. To reduce costly and potentially dangerous human error, start by setting daily and quarterly incentive goals that encourage safe behaviors in the workplace. Then, perform a job safety analysis to highlight where additional safety training may be needed. Lastly, host regular training to ensure compliance with OSHA safety standards.

CHEAT #4 *Conduct frequent safety walks of your plant floor.*

Safety inspections are designed to identify hazards to people and production. When conducting a safety walk, take note of observable hazards such as frayed electrical wires, missing machine guards, poorly-maintained equipment and property damage. These safety-related hazards need to be fixed not only to prevent injury, but also to avoid OSHA-related fines and unintended equipment downtime.

CHEAT #5 *Track and record data associated with equipment downtime.*

Knowing when, where, and how downtime occurs is essential to knowing how to prevent it. An early step toward reducing unexpected backups is to collect data on when and where downtime tends to occur. Use automatic trackers to immediately detect downtime. Then, feed this information to the factory floor for real-time viewing. Use this data to highlight downtime trends and prioritize improvements.

CHEAT #6 *Upgrade inefficient or obsolete manufacturing equipment.*

Replacing obsolete equipment is one of the best ways to improve performance and reduce downtime in your plant. If your equipment is outdated or inefficient due to age, it is most likely time to invest in an upgrade. The latest technologies are designed to be more energy-efficient than ever, which can save your organization hundreds (if not thousands) of dollars over the course of the asset's useful lifetime.

CHEAT #7 *Upload manuals, receipts and documentation into a cloud-based repository.*

When downtime occurs, nothing is more stressful than being unable to find the information you need to get equipment back up and running. A building infrastructure management software like AkitaBox serves as a cloud-based platform that compiles asset information, maintenance histories and documentation in a singular repository. Access this information on any internet-connected device from anywhere in your plant.

CHEAT #8 *Create a preventive maintenance plan that you can rely on.*

Preventive maintenance (PM) helps prevent catastrophic equipment failures before they occur. By investing your time and effort into a strong PM program, you'll increase the longevity and productivity of your equipment while simultaneously reducing risk to people and assets. As a rule of thumb, it's better to prevent issues than react to them, and PM program can help you stay ahead of the curve.

CHEAT #9 *Track the lifespans of equipment to better forecast your budget.*

When a piece of equipment has been working long past its expected useful life, the probability that it will fail becomes much higher. Track a machine's age and what type of maintenance it has received throughout its lifetime in a building infrastructure software. Some software options can forecast an asset's expected useful life and current risk of failure, which can show at-a-glance which equipment you should think about replacing next.

CHEAT #10 *Get manufacturing teams involved with plant improvements.*

Employees who understand the role they play in the manufacturing process tend to provide more valuable feedback and work at more efficient levels — both of which can contribute to decreased downtime. Leverage your team's input on ways to decrease downtime, improve safety and support morale. Listen to your production employees' suggestions and allow them to be a part of your decision-making process.

AkitaBox

Compliance-driven Inspection Software for Manufacturing Teams

Excellence in manufacturing starts with employee safety and OSHA compliance. As the industry's leading software for collecting and analyzing building infrastructure data, AkitaBox helps your manufacturing facility achieve operational excellence and ensure compliance within your plants.

AkitaBox's inspections application is designed to help facilities teams stay on top of preventive maintenance and inspection rounds. Automatically generate and assign inspection tasks, complete checklists from the manufacturing floor, and get a real-time view of ongoing inspection work across all of your buildings. Drill into associated work orders within failed inspections, and gain a better understanding of your overall OSHA compliance posture.

As a single source of truth, AkitaBox allows users to pull reports across all buildings to share with OSHA, NFPA and other regulatory agencies at a moment's notice. If you're looking to learn more ways to simplify the inspections process in your organization, visit AkitaBox.com.