



Precision Playbook: Engaging Work Instructions

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Creating Engaging Work Instructions

Hi, I'm Martin Griffiths, and I help manufacturing professionals transform traditional, paper-reliant manufacturing setups into dynamic, digital-driven powerhouses.

When the game is about precision, efficiency, and consistent quality, paper-based instructions just won't cut it anymore.

With this guide, and the accompanying work instruction templates, I'm sharing the blueprint to **CREATING ENGAGING WORK INSTRUCTIONS**.



These are not just any instructions. They're designed to be crystal clear, visually impactful, and easily digestible, setting your operators up for success from the get-go.

The end result: **You'll be able to empower operators** with all they need to create amazing quality products, every time.

And with operations running smoothly, **you'll be able to redirect your energies to business growth and innovation.**

Dive in and discover how top-tier work instructions can redefine your manufacturing excellence!

This is what you'll get:

- ✓ **Streamlined Operations**
Say goodbye to ambiguities and inefficiencies.
- ✓ **Empowered Operators**
Equip your team with the clarity they need to produce impeccable quality, every single time.
- ✓ **Elevated Confidence**
Boost trust - within your team, in yourself, and from your customers.

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Why are effective work instructions crucial?

Consider work instructions as the blueprint for manufacturing success.

In industries like automotive and aerospace, precision isn't just important; it's **essential**.

When instructions are clear and up-to-date, we see fewer mistakes, consistent quality, and efficient workflows.

On the flip side, if they're ambiguous or outdated, that's when issues arise. Mistakes become more common, rework increases, and production may lag.

No team wants to be second-guessing their steps.

So... Let's dive into a structured yet straightforward approach to creating work instructions that empower operators to consistently deliver their best.

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1

Understand Your Audience

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Skill

Considering the varying skill levels of operators is crucial for creating work instructions that are inclusive, effective, and user-friendly. Your work instructions should account for the needs of new recruits who will need more detailed instructions, versus veteran operators who may prefer succinct instructions with options to access in-depth details if required.

Learning Styles

Regardless of skill level, people have varied learning styles. Some might prefer visual aids, others might benefit from written explanations, if your work instructions cater to these varied preferences, the operators will gain a better understanding of content.



Language

Manufacturing attracts a diverse range of people with people from different backgrounds, so it's worth regularly polling your operators to determine which languages are most commonly spoken among your workforce. You might then consider translating written work instructions into the most spoken languages, with an option to toggle between languages within the work instructions.

Clear Objectives

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When objectives are clearly defined and instructions are well-structured, it reduces ambiguities and errors, ensuring tasks are completed efficiently and safely.

Clearly define the primary purpose of each instruction. Whether it's assembling a component, calibrating a machine, or performing maintenance, your objective should detail the desired end result.

Specify the standards that operators should meet. This could involve quality, speed, accuracy, repeatability, or any other relevant metric.

And offer a brief overview explaining why a particular instruction is essential. Understanding the bigger picture can motivate operators and provide clarity



Break Down Complex Tasks into Simpler Steps



Present steps in a logical order, ensuring that each action naturally follows the previous one. This reduces confusion and helps operators understand the flow of the task.



For intricate tasks, provide a detailed breakdown. For instance, instead of saying "Assemble the device," you might specify "Attach Part A to Part B using three 2-inch screws."



Organize instructions using clear sub-headings for different stages of a task and bullet points for individual actions. This makes instructions more scannable and digestible.

3

Design for Visual Impact

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Visual Aids

Visual aids can often convey information more quickly and understandably than text alone. They help in bridging language barriers, catering to visual learners, and clarifying complex concepts.

Detailed images, diagrams, or videos can help operators identify components, understand assembly sequences, and ensure that they're performing tasks correctly.



Best Practices for Layout and Design

Use a consistent style, colour scheme, and typography across all instructions. This creates a cohesive look and feel, making materials instantly recognizable.



Avoid clutter. Generous spacing between elements ensures that instructions are easy to scan and don't overwhelm the reader.



Structure information using headings, sub-headings, and bullet points. This provides a clear flow and helps operators distinguish between primary tasks and sub-tasks.



Use universally recognised icons to represent common actions or warnings, reducing the need for explanatory text.

Tips for Appealing Instructions



Use clear, high-resolution images.



For tasks with sequential steps, use numbered diagrams or flowcharts



Short video clips for complex tasks.



Utilize colors to categorize information, highlight important steps, or indicate different phases of a task.

4

Clear and Concise Writing

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Avoid Jargon

Not all operators might be familiar with specific technical terms, especially if they are new or come from different areas of expertise.

For unavoidable jargon, consider including a glossary or a quick tooltip on digital platforms to explain terms. This way, if someone is unfamiliar with a term, they have an easy reference.

Use Active Voice

Active voice emphasizes the doer of the action and is straightforward.

For example, "Press the button" (active) rather than "The button should be pressed" (passive).



What to Include and What to Leave Out

- ✓ Start by listing out all the actions required to complete a task. Ensure that each step is necessary and contributes to the desired outcome.
- ✓ Make sure the sequence of instructions is logical and mirrors the actual workflow. Rearrange steps if necessary to ensure clarity.
- ✗ If certain information is repeated in multiple sections or is common knowledge among your operators, consider condensing or omitting it to keep instructions streamlined.
- ✗ Limit "Why" Explanations: While it's sometimes beneficial to explain why a certain step is essential, be judicious. Over-explaining can make instructions lengthy and distracting.

Interactive Elements

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Incorporate Clickable Links and Interactive Media

Clickable Links can be used to direct operators to additional resources, deeper dives into specific topics, or related instructions.



Embedding links ensures that operators are always directed to the latest version of a document or resource.

Interactive Media including videos, animations, or interactive diagrams allow operators to visualize processes in action. Interactive media can often be paused, rewind, or explored at the user's pace, catering to different learning speeds.

Setting up a Feedback Loop for Operators

Ensure there are clear and easily accessible channels for operators to provide feedback. This could be a digital form, a dedicated email address, or an in-app feedback mechanism.

Allow operators to categorize their feedback – whether it's reporting an ambiguity, suggesting an improvement, or highlighting a safety concern.



On digital platforms, incorporate analytics to gauge which sections receive the most feedback or which types of feedback are most common. This data can inform targeted improvements or training sessions.

Using the Template

We've included a template work instruction that you can use to get started right away.

This template is designed not just as a blank slate, but as a guided pathway infused with the principles discussed in this guide. Think of it as your interactive blueprint.

Start by filling in the sections, paying close attention to the prompts and placeholders. They're there to remind you of the best practices we've covered, from using active voice to incorporating visual aids.





The template has been crafted to ensure clarity, conciseness, and visual appeal. By using it, you're already a step ahead in creating engaging instructions.

DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATE HERE

Manufacturing Traveller Template Cover Sheet

Works Order:		Quantity:	
Product:		Serial / Batch	
Rev:		Due Date:	
Options:		Customer:	

Operation	Description
1000	Machine Shop
2000	Assembly
3000	Test
4000	Paint
5000	Dispatch

Learning work instructions Template						
Operation Detail Sheet [Operation Name Here]						
Works Order:		Quantity:				
Product:		Serial / Batch				
Rev:		Due Date:				
Options:		Customer:				
<div><div>1</div><div>2</div><div>3</div><div>4</div></div>						
Operation	Description	Materials	Time (Mins)	HSE	QA	Complete
1010	Clean incoming materials	M7752	1 Min			
1020	Reset Mazak and select Prog 1		1 Min			
	Load material		5 Mins			



Ready to Ramp Up?

Next Steps

Harnessing the power of clear, concise, and engaging work instructions is pivotal in elevating the efficiency and quality of your manufacturing processes.

By integrating the insights from this guide, you're not only paving the way for the adoption of cutting-edge digital solutions in your facility but also fostering a culture of precision and consistency.

When you apply these principles, you empower your diverse team to deliver exceptional products at peak productivity levels. Without adopting these strategies, you risk navigating blindly, relying on gut instincts rather than tangible data, and battling recurring challenges.

Are you envisioning a future where your operations are seamlessly managed with cutting-edge software that offers real-time performance tracking and oversight?

Would you appreciate having more time to strategise and innovate?

Let's bring that vision to life.

Book a free **Digital Strategy Session** with us.

Together, we'll chart the most effective path to elevate your manufacturing prowess.

Ready to take the leap?

[Click here to schedule your call.](#)

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