

Valuable Secrets from the Shopfloor



Yes, shopfloor procedures have been documented. But are they followed? Always?

When interviewing operators to design new IT systems for the shopfloor, you will find undocumented exceptions in work-processes like:

- *“In that case I just run the material one more time through the operation”*
- *“If this happens we override the system with a manual approval and we mark it on the label”*
- *“In some occasions we use a special tool or we switch over to another machine”.*



These undocumented exceptions are often there for a good reason: the operator uses his professional judgement and wants to avoid a loss or a downtime. They can be essential for productivity, are not documented and can only be found in the details in the practise.

New shopfloor IT systems must provide a good support for these exceptions. It is not just the happy flow, where everything is valid and on spec, that is important. In particular attention is needed for the undocumented exceptions and how to handle these.

To find these secrets and take them in account when designing systems, it makes sense to:

Expect the exceptions, lookout and be open to them. Understand their relevance, identify how to work in accordance with QA and logistics, and design IT solutions to support this.

Involve practical knowledge on shopfloor operations early and intensively in the project. Shopfloor key user involvement is fundamental for ensuring a successful deployment.

Test early in the process and often. There can be a world of difference between interpretation of a design document and reviewing a working test system.

New IT systems on the shopfloor to coordinate work, guide the execution and record the results make the shopfloor work more procedural and more structured. There is more instruction on what to do, and more recording of what happened. That will only work if there is sufficient attention for handling the exception cases. And: it may require a shift in the operator mindset: going from freedom and personal judgement to a mindset of following the procedure.

To find out more and how MOMi can help [contact us](#).