

CRAFTSMAN'S CRIBSHEET

NUMBER
13

Miles Free – Director of Technology and Research



Technical



Regulatory



Quality



Management

THE PURPOSE OF WORK INSTRUCTIONS

Employees do not work with a copy of a work instruction in hand. So why do we have them? Here are ideas on how to get the most value out of these documents.

1. Training

- New employees start with the process expert so that they can observe how tasks should be performed.
- The trainer uses the work instructions so that the new employee understands the basis for which they are performing tasks.
- The trainer can reaffirm the defined steps, and the new person can confirm the validity of the process.
- This training process is a great opportunity for an additional review of the content of the work instructions.

2. Reference

- Ensure that the work instructions are readily available in case of questions (electronically whenever possible).
- Be sure the content of the instructions is in a format that allows for quick reading, one thought per bullet point.
- Do not write in paragraphs, nobody wants to read a story.
- Write "how" the instruction is to be done specifically for each core task.
- Avoid defining "why" the activity is performed. There should not be a need for an expert organization to reaffirm why core tasks are needed.
- If it is felt that "why" information needs to be defined, write separately from these reference instructions and make this additional description available as "reference only" training documents.

3. Problem Solving

- Reference the work instructions when internal or external nonconformances are identified.



- Ask if the supporting instruction properly defines the process; audit the instruction to confirm proper definition.
- If the task is properly defined, the manner by which training is conducted may need to be revisited.
- The operator/employee cannot be held fully accountable if the records of training are to an inadequately defined work instruction.

4. Continuous Improvement

- The current documentation should be the starting point for all improvements.
- Improve the work instructions through document reviews, audits, a problem solving process and, most importantly, with the input from the experts who perform the tasks.
- Always improve existing documentation before deciding to create a new document.
- Increased volume does not equate to continuous improvement.

Identifying that your work instructions serve these four key purposes provides additional evidence that your organization practices advanced quality planning. It demonstrates that top management understands the importance of ensuring that guiding documentation is properly created, implemented, utilized and improved upon.