



EPICENTRAL

A Newsletter from Epicenter Development Group
highlighting ideas that improve organizations

Welcome to Epicenter Development Group's newsletter, EPICentral. The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight fundamental ideas that have helped organizations develop and maintain great manufacturing and service operations. We hope that you find our EPICentral newsletter helpful, and we would welcome your comments on its content.

Mistake-Proofing Your Operations Using Poka-Yoke

Poka-Yoke (Mistake-proofing) is a general Lean and Six Sigma philosophy that is used to either prevent mistakes from happening or correct mistakes as early as possible in a process. There are two basic types of Poka-Yoke Prevention and Detection.

Prevention or Prediction Poka-Yoke

The goal is to prevent a mistake from occurring by making it difficult or impossible for an operator to make an error. Examples may include:

- Fixtures with stops and guide pins that allow parts to be inserted in only one orientation.
- Light curtains that will not cycle a press if an operator's hands are not clear of the machine.
- Parts that can only be assembled in one way.
- Auto-torque screwdrivers that will not allow an operator to over torque a screw.

Detection Poka-Yoke

The goal is to quickly detect mistakes so that corrections can be made and defects will not be passed on to subsequent operations. Examples may include:

- Go-NoGo and other simple gages.
- Templates that visually show the correct assembly configuration.
- Scales that can measure product weight against accepted range and signal problems.
- Parts that won't fit into the container if they were assembled incorrectly.

General considerations when developing a Poka-Yoke system:

- The faster people can identify a defect, the better chance people have of identifying and correcting the cause. For this reason, programs should focus on self-checks at the workstation versus sorting defects out at the end of the process.

- Poka-Yoke solutions will typically only be economically viable if they are simple and inexpensive. Do not over complicate the solution. Focus on many, small Poka-Yoke tools versus MEGA-solutions.
- The best source of ideas is from the workforce. Don't underestimate this resource.

Next Steps

If you would like more information on this topic or other similar types of tools, please contact Bill Proctor with your request at wproctor@epicentergroup.com or 216-702-0952. You can also find previous issues of EPICentral at [Newsletters](#).

Mr. Proctor also speaks on a variety of problem-solving and system design topics that can help companies significantly increase the success and profitability of their businesses. If you are interested in having Bill speak at one of your upcoming meetings/events or would like more information on any of the speaking topics, please visit [Speaker Services](#) or you can email sales@epicentergroup.com.

Epicenter Development Group is a unique consulting firm that seamlessly integrates the disciplines of Systems Engineering and Organizational Analysis & Development to create practical design solutions to your toughest challenges. It is on the cutting edge of problem-solving solutions and the creator of a unique process called GreenRoom Engineering. This process adds greater value and cost savings for clients as compared to traditional engineering methods.

William Proctor, Epicenter's founder and president, has provided services around the country to more than 100 companies consisting of a variety of organizations; and Epicenter continues to grow as a resource for firms of all sizes.

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