

Common Challenges And Pitfalls In Deploying Poka- Yoke



KEY LEARNINGS: COMMON CHALLENGES AND PITFALLS IN DEPLOYING POKA-YOKE

◆ Why Mistake-Proofing Fails in Service Environments

• If it feels like extra work, people won't use it

- Example: Barcode tags at a dry cleaning chain were skipped during rush hours due to slow systems.
- Fix: Faster scanners and auto-confirmation made scanning quicker than skipping—errors dropped.

• People forget why the system exists

- Example: Designers ignored file-naming rules after a few weeks, leading to version mix-ups and client loss.
- Fix: Integrated file-naming guide in the upload tool to make compliance part of the process.

• Fixes that work for one group may not work for everyone

- Example: Separate scheduling systems used by reception and nursing staff at a care home led to double bookings.
- Fix: Unified, real-time scheduling system accessible to all staff resolved conflicts.

• Mistakes stay hidden until it's too late

- Example: New hires skipped onboarding tips and made repeat errors on client calls.
- Fix: Added short knowledge checks after each section to ensure engagement and retention.

◆ Key Lessons for Successful Mistake-Proofing

• Smart systems must be easy to use

- Reduce friction so that following the process is quicker than skipping it.

• Build mistake-proofing into the workflow—not as an extra task

- Design tools that show up naturally during daily actions, not just as policies or reminders

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- **Ensure systems work for everyone, not just one team**
 - Mistake-proofing is only effective when all users interact with the same, integrated tools.
- **Monitor behavior and not just design**
 - Good design helps, but systems must also shape habits and ensure accountability.
- ◆ **Final Takeaway**
 - Mistake-proofing isn't about adding more rules—it's about creating simple, effective systems that:
 - Fit how people actually work
 - Trigger at the right moment
 - Get used every time without fail
 - The most dangerous failures don't explode—they fade in slowly as people skip steps or stop trusting the system.
 - Mistake-proofing protects not just productivity—but also customer trust and service integrity.

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