

## PROVEN TIPS TO IMPROVE QUALITY IN OVERSEAS MANUFACTURING

# THE PLAN

*What to do prior to production:*

### Meet the Plant Manager(s) in Person

Are they on-time, professionally dressed, courteous and respectful?

### Inspect the Factory

Is the facility clean, organized and does it have segregated area(s) for rejected goods?

### Review Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

You might be surprised how many times I have been told they don't have SOPs or SOPs printed, bound and available for workers, managers or customers to review. If they don't have SOPs, ask them to contact you when they do.

### Review Their Operating Procedures

Where are inspection tools stored, how often are they calibrated and by whom?

### Prepare a Supplier Agreement

*Key components include:*

- Outline culture, goals, and how both sides benefit and fail.
- Discuss frequency of inspections, such as after first articles, production set-up, during production, packing, etc.
- Must include a factory scorecard (as an exhibit)
- Must include factory SOPs (as an exhibit)



**Be consistent!** As soon as you stop maintaining and sharing the scorecard the factory stops worrying about the scores they earn with you.

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# THE ISSUE

*What to do when issues arise:*

### Develop a Communications Plan

As soon as a quality issue is discovered, communicate this to your supplier. Provide the specifics and work together to find a solution.

### Brainstorm Solutions in Advance

It can be helpful in the relationship with your supplier to offer potential solutions - perhaps they haven't even considered some of the options. Remember to keep them realistic!

### Look at Things From the Supplier's Point of View

Take time to share inspection results with your suppliers so they can better understand the impact of the quality issue. This can also help them improve processes in the future.

### Use Your Supplier Agreement

Review your supplier agreement to see if these issues have been planned for.

*Key questions to consider include:*

- Was this anticipated?
- What can be learned from this?
- How can this issue be avoided in the future?
- Should the supplier agreement be amended?

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF YOUR OVERSEAS PRODUCTION:



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