

Wrench Time Program Starter Checklist for O&G

A practical guide to help refineries and Oil & Gas facilities evaluate readiness for a Wrench Time improvement program that increases asset availability, reduces waste, and strengthens maintenance efficiency.

Purpose

Wrench Time is the primary KPI for measuring how effectively a refinery's maintenance organization converts labor hours into value-adding work. High Wrench Time correlates directly with improved asset availability, lower maintenance costs, safer job execution, and stronger operational competitiveness.

This checklist helps O&G organizations assess their readiness to implement a structured Wrench Time improvement program - before launching data collection, software tools, or process changes. It highlights the foundational elements that determine whether a Wrench Time initiative will deliver reliable insights and sustainable improvements.

It is not a full implementation guide. Instead, it provides a strategic starting point to help you identify gaps, align stakeholders, and determine whether expert support may accelerate your results.

How to Use This Checklist

Use this checklist to:

- Facilitate internal discussions among maintenance, operations, planning, and reliability teams
- Identify gaps in your current maintenance processes, data practices, and organizational readiness
- Prioritize early actions that will strengthen your Wrench Time program foundation
- Understand where external expertise may be beneficial - especially around methodology, sampling, analytics, and change management

You do not need every item in place before beginning. This tool is meant to guide thinking, not prescribe a rigid sequence.

Is a Wrench Time Program Right for Your Facility?

If this checklist raises important questions, or highlighted gaps you want to address, we can help. Our team has implemented Wrench Time programs across refineries in the U.S. and Canada, enabling maintenance teams to own, drive, and sustain improvements that deliver measurable cost savings and reliability gains.

Whether you need methodology design, training, analytics, or full program deployment, we can support you at any stage of your journey.

Contact us to discuss your goals and explore how we can help.

Checklist for Planning a Wrench Time Program for O&G

Strategic Foundation

- Clear rationale for implementing a Wrench Time program (reliability gaps, cost pressures, turnaround performance, benchmarking results)
- Defined scope: routine maintenance, corrective work, preventive work, turnarounds, or capital projects
- Identification of key stakeholders (maintenance, operations, planning, reliability, HSE) and their expected involvement
- Guiding principles for the program (accuracy, transparency, non-punitive data use, continuous improvement)
- Alignment with refinery business objectives (asset availability, OPEX reduction, safety performance)
- Preliminary budget and resource considerations
- Understanding of current Solomon benchmarking position and improvement targets (if applicable)

Program Objectives & Governance

- Documented objectives tied to measurable outcomes (e.g., % Wrench Time, reduced delays, improved planning quality)
- Prioritization of improvement goals based on operational impact
- Assignment of executive sponsor, maintenance champion, and cross-functional steering team
- Defined roles for planners, supervisors, observers, analysts, and Continuous Improvement leads
- Governance structure for decision-making, barrier removal, and progress review
- Communication plan to align crafts, supervisors, and leadership on purpose and expectations

Operational Framework and Methodology

- Review of current maintenance processes (notification → planning → scheduling → execution → closeout)
- Selection of Wrench Time measurement approach (work sampling recommended over DILO/job shadowing)
- Definition of sampling strategy (frequency, duration, confidence level)
- Clarification of responsibilities for observers, planners, and supervisors
- Capability development plan (training on observation, data integrity, categorization of value-add vs. non-value-add)
- Defined processes for analyzing results and validating improvement opportunities
- Timeline for phased rollout across units, crafts, or maintenance groups

Data, Tools and Resource Preparation

- Confirmation of tools and systems needed for data collection (manual, digital, or software-enabled)
- Identification of required templates, observation forms, or digital applications
- Allocation of internal resources to support data collection and analysis
- Planning for training sessions, field observation time, and supervisor involvement
- Development of a coaching plan to reinforce correct data capture and non-punitive behaviors
- Finalization of rollout logistics and communication touchpoint

Culture, Engagement and Change Management Considerations

- Leadership commitment to visible, hands-on support for the program
- Clear messaging that Wrench Time is about process improvement, not craft performance policing
- Mechanisms for frontline involvement in identifying barriers and proposing improvements
- Expectations for daily routines (supervisor field time, planner engagement, observation cadence)
- Approach for recognizing improvements and reinforcing desired behaviors
- Plan for sharing best practices across units, shifts, and site

Measurement, Reporting and Sustainability

- Agreement on baseline Wrench Time metrics and definitions
- Standardized categories for value-add, delay, travel, waiting, and rework
- Defined process for analyzing results and validating improvement opportunities
- Reporting cadence for leadership, maintenance teams, and cross-functional stakeholders
- Plan for periodic program reviews and maturity assessments
- Strategy for scaling successful practices across the refinery or enterprise
- Sustainability plan to prevent regression and embed Continuous Improvement