

Playbook Picker

Pick your worst KPI. Start there. Not the easiest one. Not the one your boss asked about. The one that is costing the most.

Companion to: *Fix the System*, Chapter 14. **Who uses it:** the maintenance manager or reliability engineer deciding which of the ten Part IV playbooks to run next. **When:** at the start of each quarter, or any time a KPI drifts out of range. **Why this exists:** most plants pick the most tractable playbook instead of the most consequential one. That produces motion without result. The picker forces you to rank by downstream cost, not by ease of execution.

Step 1 — Read your numbers

Pull the current reading for all eight KPIs. If you do not have a reading, mark it as *unknown* and do not skip it. An unknown is information.

#	KPI	Current reading	Benchmark (target)	Gap	Downstream cost if left alone
1	PM Compliance %		>=90%		Corrective work rises 2-3% for every 1% drop below benchmark
2	Reactive Work %		<=20%		Labor cost runs 2-5x planned-work rate; schedule chaos cascades
3	Schedule Compliance %		>=85%		Wrench time drops; planner's work gets disrespected; re-planning loop
4	Wrench Time %		>=55%		Paying for labor you do not receive; capacity gap widens
5	Repeat Failure %		<=10%		Same asset eats labor 2-5x more than a permanent fix; trust erodes
6	Backlog (ready weeks)		2-4		Below 2: you are not finding work. Above 4: you are losing control

7	Inspection Compliance %		>=95%		Failure modes develop silently; CBM data gaps
8	Parts Fill Rate %		>=95%		PM delays, hidden truck time, stock-pile growth in techs' toolboxes

Step 2 — Circle the worst

Circle the KPI with the biggest gap **weighted by downstream cost**, not the one with the biggest percentage gap. A KPI that is 5 points below benchmark but drives everything downstream is worse than one that is 15 points below benchmark but affects only itself.

The three most common "worst" KPIs, and their matching playbooks:

- **PM Compliance below 85% -> Playbook 15: PM Compliance Recovery** (Chapter 15)
- **Reactive Work above 40% -> Playbook 18: Reactive Work Reduction** (Chapter 18)
- **Repeat Failure above 15% -> Playbook 16: Repeat Failure Investigation** (Chapter 16)

If your worst KPI is not one of these three, use the matching table below.

If your worst KPI is...	Run this playbook	Chapter
PM Compliance	PM Compliance Recovery	15
Repeat Failures	Repeat Failure Investigation	16
Backlog (too large or too small)	Backlog Growth Control	17
Reactive Work %	Reactive Work Reduction	18
Schedule Compliance	Schedule Compliance Improvement	19
Inspection Compliance	Inspection Compliance Recovery	20
Parts Fill Rate	Spare Parts Management	21
Declining MTBF on critical assets with no repeat-failure signal	Condition-Based Monitoring	22
Downtime hours	Downtime Reduction	23
MTTR	MTTR Reduction	24

Step 3 — Pick a minor (optional)

One major + one minor is the limit. A minor should feed the major, not compete with it.

Major playbook	Most supportive minor	Why
15 PM Compliance Recovery	21 Spare Parts Management	Parts unavailability is the #1 cause of PM misses
16 Repeat Failure Investigation	22 Condition-Based Monitoring	CBM catches the failure modes RCA surfaces
17 Backlog Growth Control	19 Schedule Compliance	Compliance discipline drains backlog
18 Reactive Work Reduction	20 Inspection Compliance	Better inspections surface work before it becomes reactive
19 Schedule Compliance	18 Reactive Work Reduction	Reactive work is the single largest threat to the schedule
20 Inspection Compliance	22 Condition-Based Monitoring	Inspection data feeds CBM thresholds
21 Spare Parts Management	15 PM Compliance Recovery	Parts only matter if PMs are trying to consume them
22 Condition-Based Monitoring	16 Repeat Failure Investigation	CBM without RCA is data with no decision
23 Downtime Reduction	18 Reactive Work Reduction	Most downtime is a reactive-work symptom
24 MTTR Reduction	15 PM Compliance Recovery	Most MTTR problems are missing procedures, which PMs expose

Skip this step if you do not have the staff to run two tracks.

Step 4 — Confirm the trigger (week 1 only)

Before launching the playbook, spend one week confirming the KPI is drifting for the reason you think.

- Pull twelve months of data for the KPI and the assets behind it.
- Interview the three people closest to the work (one planner, one supervisor, one tech).
- Sit in on two executions of the work that produces the KPI.
- Write a one-paragraph statement of the actual root cause before launching.

If the actual root cause does not match what the playbook is designed to address, re-pick. You have one week to make this decision without cost. Launching into the wrong playbook burns the whole 90 days.

Step 5 — Read your playbook chapter

Flip to the chapter that matches your circled KPI. Read it end to end before starting week 2. The roadmap is paced. The sequence is the sequence.

If you finish the chapter and the trigger does not fit your situation, come back to Step 2. Do not start the install.

When to run two majors

Almost never. The exception is an existential event: regulatory action, customer loss, safety incident, corporate watch list.

If you must run two majors:

1. Add two senior staff before starting. Not one. 2. Pick playbooks that use different data and different meetings. 15 + 16 is possible. 15 + 18 is not. 3. Plan for 120-180 days, not 90.

If you cannot do 1, 2, and 3, you cannot run two majors. Pick one.

What to avoid

- **Picking the most tractable playbook** instead of the most consequential. That is the #1 failure mode of this section. A visible quick win on a KPI that is already in range is worse than a slow grind on the one that matters.
 - **Running three or more playbooks at once.** Attention collapses. Every program gets undercooked. You get motion across the plant and results nowhere.
 - **Launching in week 1.** The first week is always diagnosis. Always.
 - **Stopping at day 60.** The stabilization phase (days 60-90) is where the gain becomes permanent. Most regressions happen because the program was declared done at day 45.
 - **Skipping the benchmark comparison.** A KPI with no benchmark is a KPI you cannot pick with. Chapter 4 has the numbers. Use them.
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End of Playbook Picker. See Chapters 15-24 for the ten playbooks.