

When standardization starts costing judgment

A strong shop does not make every job identical; it makes standards serve the work while keeping skilled judgment alive.

Subject: When standardization starts costing judgment

Standardized jobs, tighter book times, and diagnostic automation can improve consistency-but only if they support the mechanic rather than turn the mechanic into a machine.

A useful standard should protect the outcome without dictating every decision. Three practical tests help: Does the process leave room for invention where conditions vary? Is exact finish being demanded for a real reason, or for its own sake? Can each step be defended as necessary to the whole?

The underlying principle is simple: thought and labor should remain connected. Variation is not automatically sloppiness, just as uniformity is not automatically quality.

Would you be open to comparing one standardized job against these tests in a brief conversation?