**FOR MANUFACTURERS**

BHARATEEYA STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

MANUFACTURING EDITION

# The Floor Call

*One wrong order can stop the line for a month. Decide like it.*



Kuruva Venkata RamanaMurthy

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Contact: venkat@venkatmurthy.in

# The Seven Disciplines

*One decision, carried through seven stages, in a fixed order.*

**V1** **Drishti** · *Reality*
What is the Maximum Friction?

↓

**V2** **Nischaya** · *Direction*
Which direction removes it?

↓

**V3** **Bodha** · *Stakeholders*
Who must align for this to succeed?

↓

**V4** **Swadharma** · *Natural Strength*
What unique strength do I build on?

↓

**V5** **Margarekha** · *Sequence*
In what sequence should this happen?

↓

**V6** **Pramaan** · *Evidence*
What evidence proves this will work?

↓

**V7** **Sadhana** · *Build, Fix and Scale*
What do I build, fix and scale?

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↺ *Every cycle removes one friction and reveals the next*

Diagnose Design Prove and execute

BEFORE CHAPTER 1

# Quick Start

## Get One Decision Working in Two Pages

Do not finish this book first. Finish one decision first. What you write here is **provisional** until you complete the full V1 to V7 worksheets. The seven disciplines run in a fixed order: Drishti, Nischaya, Bodha, Swadharma, Margarekha, Pramaan, Sadhana. Carry one decision through all seven.

*Illustrative example: Repair the two faulty hopper dryers and trial dried material on one machine for two weeks, keep 100 per cent dispatch inspection only as temporary containment, and go to the customer's supplier review on Friday 4 September with the trial data, rather than hire four permanent inspectors.* The completed version is in Chapter 10. Read it after you have learned the disciplines.

### Page 1. Choose, name and aim

**1. One real decision about your unit, your customers or your family business this month:**

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**2. What is really happening** (one factual line, with a number if you have one):

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**3. Three friction points**, each with evidence you can point to today:

1. _____ Evidence: _____
2. _____ Evidence: _____
3. _____ Evidence: _____

**4. Candidate Maximum Friction.** The longest cascade is a clue. Confirm which one sits upstream and causes the others.

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**Mechanism** (what produces it, not the gauge): _____ **Measured today:** _____

## Page 2. Direction through first action

**5. Nischaya.** Do: _____ Delay (until when): _____ Delete (why): _____

**6. Bodha.** One Builder (a person whose action this needs) to ask this week, and the ask:

Who loses something, and what you will say to them:

**7. Swadharma.** The strength you have, with evidence, that this direction needs:

**8. Margarekha.** What must happen first, before anything else can work:

**9. Pramaan.** What result would prove this wrong? Write it before you start:

**10. Sadhana.** Action this week: _____ Number watched: _____ Review on: _____

Now take this same decision into Chapter 3 (V1), then V2 to V7, without switching problems. Chapter 10 shows one decision completed all the way through.

CHAPTER 1

# Why Strategy Fails Before It Begins

Somewhere in your plant there is a problem you have already solved more than once.

Late dispatches. High rejection at one station. A machine that is always "under maintenance". You found it. You fixed it. It went quiet for a while. Then it came back in slightly different clothes, and you fixed it again.

Nobody was careless. The fix was sensible both times. And yet here it is.

This book is about why that happens, and why it matters most when you are about to commit money to something you cannot easily take back: a machine, a shed, a loan, a customer.

♦ ♦ ♦

Every owner wants a good outcome.

Full order books. Dispatches on time. Rejections low. Customers who pay within terms. A plant that still makes sense when the next generation takes it over.

To get there, owners usually respond by acting. They buy another machine. They add a shift. They take one more customer's programme to fill capacity. They hire contract labour for the peak. They ask the bank for a higher limit.

Some of these moves work.

Many do not.

The common assumption is that plant decisions fail because of poor execution. The operators did not follow the SOP. The supervisor was weak. The customer changed the schedule. But execution is rarely where the failure begins.

Failure begins much earlier.

It begins when you commit money to a solution before you understand what is actually holding the plant back.

## The Painkiller Worked

Imagine a patient walking into a hospital with a severe headache.

Without asking questions or running any tests, the doctor prescribes a painkiller.

The headache disappears for a few hours.

A week later, the patient returns with fatigue. The doctor prescribes vitamins.

A month later, the patient develops a high fever and is finally diagnosed with an infection that had been there from the beginning.

The treatment was not the problem.

The diagnosis was.

Notice the detail that makes this story dangerous, not just sad.

**The painkiller worked.**

The headache did go away. The doctor had evidence. The patient was satisfied for a while. Nothing in that first visit looked like a mistake. If the patient had never come back, everyone would have called it a success.

This is why wrong diagnoses survive. Not because they fail visibly, but because they succeed a little, immediately, in a way that is easy to point at.

Plants work the same way. An owner whose dispatches are late buys a second machine for the bottleneck operation. For a month output rises. Then the dispatches slip again, because the time was being lost in changeovers and waiting for material, and the new machine waits in the same queue as the old one.

## The Reasonable Decisions

Owners make this mistake every month.

Dispatches are late, so a third shift is added. Rejections are high, so an extra inspection stage is added at the end of the line. Margins are thin, so a bigger customer is chased for volume. Cash is tight, so the bank limit is raised. Labour is unreliable, so a contractor is brought in.

Each decision looks reasonable. Each one addresses the problem that was named.

And each one produces something. The third shift does add output. The inspection does catch bad parts before they leave. The bigger customer does fill the floor. There is always something that improves, and there is always a number to show at the monthly review.

Yet, after a few weeks or months, the same issue returns.

Why?

Because the decision treated the symptom that was visible instead of understanding what was creating it.

## What It Actually Costs

We tend to describe a wrong diagnosis as time lost. That undersells it.

A wrong diagnosis is not a pause before the right one. In a plant it costs you in three separate ways, and the third is the one that is hardest to reverse.

**It spends the budget of the correct decision.** The capital, the bank limit, the supervisor's attention, the floor space. A machine bought for the wrong bottleneck uses the money and the space the right fix needed.

**It manufactures evidence.** A year of running the new machine produces utilisation reports, EMI receipts and a sincere belief that the plant has grown. You now have proof that you invested. That makes it harder to admit that output per day has barely moved.

**It multiplies whatever the plant already is.** If changeovers take half a shift, a second machine doubles the changeovers. If quality depends on one experienced setter, a new line depends on him twice. A unit that adds capacity before fixing its scheduling, then adds a shift to run it, then raises the bank limit to fund the inventory, has not grown. It has moved the same confusion into a more expensive stage.

By the time the real diagnosis arrives, it must be funded from a smaller budget, argued against a machine that is already on the floor, and carried out by a team that has already been told the last fix was the answer.

## The Most Expensive Error in Manufacturing

The greatest danger in running a plant is not making the wrong part.

**It is solving the right problem on the wrong machine, or the wrong problem with the right machine.**

You can buy the best machine in its class and still get no more out of the plant, if the machine was never the constraint.

You can run more shifts, hire more operators and add more inspectors, and still make no real progress, because your money is going to symptoms instead of causes.

This error hides inside competence. Engineering skill cannot find it, because skill is not the missing ingredient. Better maintenance cannot find it, because the maintenance is already good. It survives every audit, because every audit asks *was the process followed?* and never *was the process aimed at the right thing?*

Before asking *which machine should I buy?*, ask:

**What is really holding this plant back?**

And before asking *should I expand, export or automate?*, ask the same question about the business.

This question changes everything.

## Every Serious Profession Knows This

Where mistakes are expensive, understanding comes before action. A doctor diagnoses before prescribing. An engineer finds the fault before replacing parts.

Your plant should be no different. You already know this on the floor. A good maintenance engineer does a root cause analysis be-

fore changing the part. A good quality head asks why five times before closing a complaint.

Yet many owners reverse the order when the decision is about the business.

They commit first. They understand later.

Not because they are careless. Because of pressure. The customer wants a capacity commitment before the programme is awarded. The machine supplier's price is valid only till month end. The subsidy scheme closes this quarter. Diagnosis has nothing to show for itself on the first afternoon.

## What This Book Will Not Do

It will not tell you which machine to buy, which customer to take or which market to enter. It cannot. Nobody who has not walked your floor can.

It will not replace lean, TPM, Six Sigma or your ERP. It will give you a method that runs underneath whichever of them you use.

And it will not save you time in the first week. It will cost you time in the first week, and return that time many times over in the years after. That is the same deal a proper root cause analysis offers a plant.

What it will do is stop you from investing well in the wrong direction.

♦ ♦ ♦

Because activity is not a strategy. More shifts are not a strategy. A bigger shed is not a strategy.

Real decisions begin with understanding the plant's actual situation.

Every plant has many problems. Only a few decide what happens next.

Your first job is not to solve all of them.

It is to find out which problem must be solved first.

That raises an uncomfortable question, and the next chapter has to answer it.

If diagnosis matters this much, and owners are intelligent and experienced and honest, why is it so often wrong?