



How to Get Technicians to Actually Use the CMMS

Most CMMS implementations don't fail because technicians dislike technology. They fail because the system makes their job harder in the moment. If closing a work order on a phone takes longer than writing a note on paper, or if the data they enter never comes back in a useful way, adoption stays low. Supervisors then spend time chasing incomplete records instead of improving reliability.

Getting technicians to use the CMMS consistently comes down to a few practical tactics that reduce friction and show them the benefit. Here are the ones that move the needle fastest.

Make the Mobile Experience the Path of Least Resistance

Technicians work on the floor, not at a desk. If the mobile app requires too many taps, confusing menus, or a stable Wi-Fi connection to complete basic tasks, they will default to paper or memory. Review the actual steps required to start a job, update status, add a note or photo, and close it out. Remove or simplify anything that isn't essential for the majority of work.

Test the workflow with two or three technicians who do the work every day and ask them where they hesitate. Common fixes include larger buttons for frequent actions, the ability to attach a photo in one tap, offline capability for areas with poor signal, and pre-filled fields where possible. When completing a work order on the phone is faster and easier than the old method, usage rises without constant reminders.

Show Technicians Their Own Data in Team Huddles

People pay attention to information that reflects their own work. Instead of only reviewing plant-wide metrics, pull simple data tied to the crew or individual and discuss it in the daily or weekly huddle. Examples include open jobs assigned to the team, average time to close certain types of work, or a short list of recent jobs missing a failure code or photo.

Keep the review short and non-punitive. The goal is visibility, not blame. When technicians see that the information they enter appears in the meeting and helps the group decide what to work on next, the connection between data entry and useful outcomes becomes clear. Over a few weeks this habit turns the CMMS from "extra paperwork" into something the team actually references.

Eliminate Duplicate Paper Processes

As long as a paper work order, logbook, or whiteboard still exists for the same information, technicians will use whichever method feels faster. Audit every place where the same data is captured twice and remove the paper version once the CMMS can handle it. This includes printed work orders that get handwritten notes later transcribed, shift logs that duplicate CMMS comments, and manual trackers for PM completion.

Communicate the change clearly and give people a short transition period. Once the paper option is gone, the CMMS becomes the single place to record and find information. Supervisors reinforce this by refusing to accept updates that exist only on paper. The reduction in double work is usually noticed quickly and becomes a reason to stay in the system.

Involve Technicians in Status Workflow Design

Status steps that look logical in an office often feel awkward on the floor. If technicians must move a job through five statuses that don't match how they actually work, they will skip or ignore them. Bring two or three experienced technicians into a short session to map the real sequence of a typical job—from assignment to diagnosis to parts to completion—and adjust the CMMS statuses to fit that sequence.

Limit the number of required statuses and make optional ones available for detail when needed. When technicians help define the workflow, they understand why each step exists and are more likely to follow it. The resulting process also tends to be simpler and faster, which further supports adoption.

Keep the Focus on Daily Use

These tactics work best when applied together and reinforced lightly for the first 30–60 days. Start with the mobile workflow and the removal of duplicate paper so the system is easier to use than the alternatives. Then use huddles to show the data coming back, and involve technicians when any workflow changes are considered. Supervisors should model the behavior by checking status and notes in the CMMS rather than asking for verbal updates.

Consistent use follows when the CMMS reduces effort in the moment and returns visible value to the people doing the work. The result is better data, fewer surprises, and a system the team treats as part of the job rather than an extra task.

Which of these tactics would make the biggest difference for your technicians right now?