

# INVENTORY TIPS FOR NEW SPD TECHS



INVENTORY MANAGEMENT EXPERT

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CLEAN

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# Inventory Tips for New SPD Techs

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Picture being a new Sterile Processing department (SPD) professional with no idea what to do when unexpected inventory management issues arise.

Some of the most important inventory management skills a new SPD professional should acquire include:

- Performing comprehensive inventory audits.
- Learning data collection methods and interpreting SPD inventory analytics.
- Tracking instrument usage within management modules to maintain an accurate record of instruments in circulation.

A commonly used technique to assign responsibility for inventory management among new SPD professionals is to begin their training by assigning them to a preceptor. Make sure they understand that communication, coordination, and planning are crucial to ensuring that needed inventory is available for patient procedures.

Important inventory management skills for a new SPD professional are:

- Leadership and collaboration skills: Demonstrating the ability to guide and work as part of the team.
- Planning skills: Organizing and prioritizing tasks efficiently.
- Communication skills: Conveying information clearly and effectively to all team members.
- Organizational Skills: Maintaining a systematic and orderly approach to tasks.

My favorite inventory management techniques are consigned inventory, an option for surgical instrument replacement, and par management. An optimal par level will have enough supplies to support patient care for the period from when the shelves are stocked until the next time they are counted and supplies are delivered. It also should support a buffer of safety stock to accommodate variances in supply usage or delays in replenishment.

Finally, to ensure a cohesive inventory management system, conduct staff in-services on the inventory system being used, and require all staff to take ownership and utilization of inventory.

Have more questions? Contact Debra at: [debra.burns@aesculapusa.com](mailto:debra.burns@aesculapusa.com)

*Beyond Clean Inventory Management Expert™ Biography:*

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Debra has 39 years of experience working in the Sterile Processing field, with 16 years in SPD consulting and 20 years in management. Debra maintains certifications such as CRCST, CIS, and CHL and is a certified instructor through HSPA. She also maintains certification as a Lean Black Belt Professional (LBBP). Her consulting experience includes interim management, process improvement, HSPA certification course instruction, new construction logistics, SPD assessments and asset management relating to instrument tracking systems.

Debra has managed four healthcare system SPDs, ranging from a multi-facility healthcare system in Saudi Arabia to a teaching medical center in the United States. Debra has served as President of the Nebraskaland Central Service Association. She was a member of the ASHCSP Education Committee.

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