

Concepts of Knit Garments Merchandising



By: M.R. Karthikeyan

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INTRODUCTION

Merchandising denotes all the planned activities to execute and dispatch the merchandise on time taking into consideration the 4 R's of expediting Right Cost, Right Quantity, Right Quality and Right Time.

FUNCTIONS OF MERCHANDISERS

1. Sample order execution

After the receipt of the Specification, pertaining to the sample order, the merchandiser has to understand what the requirements of buyers are. Sometimes there may be amendments related to any of the specifications in the sample order sheet. It is the duty of the merchandiser to execute sample order and dispatch on time the "Right quality."

2. Costing

The merchandisers should know the following details while costing.

- ❖ Yarn cost.
- ❖ Process cost (Knitting, Bleaching, and Raising etc.)
- ❖ Rates pertaining to various sewing operations.
- ❖ CMT (Cut Make Trim) Rate.
- ❖ Ironing charges, packing charges and accessories rate.
- ❖ Overheads.
- ❖ Shortage (or) wastage 3%.
- ❖ Free on Board (FOB) (Transport charges) 2% to 3%.
- ❖ Insurance 2%-3%,
- ❖ Buyers' agents commission 5%-6%,
- ❖ Quota rate per garment.
- ❖ Profit 15% - 20%

3. Programming

Most probably programming is done by production manager. In some companies it is done by the merchandisers. The following factors should be considered in programming.

Allowances:

- a) Fabric structure
- b) Dia. fixation (knitting dia., calendaring dia. and compacting dia.)
- c) Process loss (shrinkage etc.)
- d) Size wise piece weight
- e) Extra quantity required
- f) Size wise requirement (dia., colour (or) combination)

4. Route card Drafting (or) Production Scheduling

For each and every order Route card (or) Production scheduling is to be done by the merchandisers. It facilitates the merchandiser to follow up the orders in planned manner. The following details (or) aspects should be considered in drafting (or) scheduling.

1. Design
2. No. of sewing operations
3. No. of processes
4. Dispatch date
5. No. of Components
6. Type of stitches
7. Order quantity
8. Production capacity of the in houses (or) sub-contractors unit and processing units.
9. Prioritizing the other factors
10. Targeted dates for various processes (or) stages of merchandising.

Actual finishing date (To cross check the deviation between the planning and actual performance any stage (or) Process). Targeted dates for all the stages of merchandising should be decided. Actual dates on which a particular process (or) operation is actually done should also be entered in production scheduling. The merchandisers are accountable for the deviation.

5. Accessories arrangements

Merchandiser has to make arrangements for the timely delivery of the required accessories to the concerned units. Accessories requisition slip may be used for requirement purpose. The merchandiser has to cross check the actual requirements after verifying the details furnished in accessories requisition form. After the receipt of accessories, quality check will be done.

6. Approvals

Approval is an authentication of all required conformances related to a process (or) an operation. The merchandisers should know the quality parameters of various processes and sewing operations before approvals. There should not heron-conformities. Evidences for approval should be cross checked to confirm that all the approvals having made properly

7. Approval of various processes sewing operations and finishing processes

The various process of sewing operations and finishing process such as patter making, cutting, sewing; ironing will be approved by the technical merchandisers

8. Pattern approvals

Patterns should be approved for
1 Measurement

2. Style and fit
3. Allowances
4. Accuracy of pattern

If there is any non-conformance in pattern that should be corrected before it is used in production Pattern approval samples will be received from the concerned units and approved by the approval department (or) merchandisers, If there is non-conformance in any size sample revised sample for that size should be again submitted for approval.

9. Size set approvals

Size set approvals are made by the approval department or) by the merchandisers. All the quality parameters related to various processes, sewing operations have to be cross checked. The below mentioned aspects should be considered.

- Measurements
- Aesthetics
- Process quality
- GSM
- Piece shrinkage
- Washing fastness of the piece
- Sewing operation quality
- Print (or) embroidery position
- Labeling instructions.
- Size set approval seat will be prepared in triplicate.
- Washing fastness of garment should be verified.
- Shrinkage in garment can also be verified.

10. Preproduction samples

This samples should he submitted on time to the concerned person (Buyers, buyer agents office buying office). All the quality parameters have to be verified. In case of non-conformances it will be mentioned in the approval sheet by the concerned persons. Sometime we may have to submit the revised samples after the required rectifications.

11. Pilot run inspection

Pilot run denotes the first production garments quality parameters are verified and preventive measures can be taken. The follow up team should do pilot run inspection to identify the various defects and it will be rectified in production.

12. In process inspection

In process means in between any process (or) sewing operation (or) any activities related to execution of an order. We can have procedures for frequency and adequacy. In case of major non- conformities we have to highlight the problems of quality at the right time to the right person without fail. Consistent follow up inspection is a must to confirm that all the required quality procedures are adopted by the concerned units and preventive actions are taken to enhance the performance.

13. Production controlling

Controlling should be right from the operative level also. Efforts should be taken to control the non-conformities during production. Consistent supervision is essential to control the non-conformances. Periodical quality check should be done after an hour.

14. Shortage problem

The merchandiser has to identify the shortages of any material that is yarn, fabric, accessories etc. right at the initial stages. After identifying the shortages steps are to be taken for the arrangement of required materials on time. In case of shortages also we have to follow the quality control and quality assurance procedure without fail. Quality of the material should not be compromised.

15. Following quality control procedures

In some companies written quality procedures are available in quality manual. The merchandiser has to know all the procedures of quality control. In all processes and operations quality procedures should be followed very strictly. It has to inculcate the importance of procedures to subordinates, in-house units (or) own units, and sub contractors.

Following quality assurance procedures:

All the required test procedures (as required by the buyer) should be followed very strictly without partiality. Evidences for testing (test reports) tested samples, tested swatches, tested accessories) should be maintained properly. Before cutting, the merchandiser has to confirm that the concerned unit has got all the required approvals properly from the authorized person.

16. Monitoring the junior activities

The merchandiser has to monitor his sub-ordinates. He has to teach to the subordinates about the quality procedures. He has to give instructions to them before going for factory visits. He has to discuss the various activities to be executed on a particular day. The merchandiser has to control the activities of the subordinates so that the performance of the followed team is good.

17. Monitoring the activities of in-house unit (or) sub-contractor units

The merchandiser has to monitor the activities of in-house unit (or) sub-contractor units. He has to confirm that all the quality control procedures and quality assurance procedures are followed up properly by them (or) not. He has to inculcate the importance of adopting quality procedures to attain the planned performance level.

18. Buyer communication

The merchandiser has to go through the faxes coming from buyers and he has to send reply on time. Sometimes he has to furnish the production status of a particular order to the concerned buyer on time. The below mentioned are some of the duties of buyer communication,

- Sample execution
- Amendments
- Comments on the send samples
- Sample order sheet
- Buyer visit
- Production status
- Sending sample, swatches, Accessories regarding the approvals.

19. Communication with others

The merchandiser has to interact with in-house units, sub-contractors, vendors and job workers of various processing. Through proper interaction only we make arrangements for the timely supply of the required materials to the concerned persons. He has to know the production status from various units which will be helpful in proper follow and proper importing.

20. Proper Reporting

The merchandiser has to furnish (or) best the report to the right person at the right time. He has to give reports for the below mentioned activities

- Sample execution
- Approvals
- Testing procedures
- Production status
- Programming
- Shortage details
- Inspection details and status.
- Production status for metering etc.
- Report from inspection agencies, testing labs

21. High Lighting

The merchandiser has to highlight the major problems in merchandising at the right time without fail. Highlighting will facilitate the superiors to take the necessary steps to tackle the problems on time. Proper decision is made due to timely highlighting.

22. Record maintenance

The merchandiser has to maintain quality records pertaining to various buyer orders. Proper filing should be done, who can utilize the services of subordinates in record maintenance. The below mentioned are some examples.

- Sample details
- Sample Inspection Reports
- Testing Reports
- Evidence of approvals
- Proper filing (Buyer wise, order wise)
- Pattern Approval sheet/size set approval sheet (copy)

- Pilot run Inspection Report
- Fabric Inspection report
- Mid Inspection Report
- Inspection report from buying office, buying agents and inspection agencies.
- Test reports from inspection agencies and labs
- Production status reports
- Production status reports related to meetings
- Pre-final inspection reports
- Final inspection reports etc.

23. Developing samples

Some buyers will give specifications (or) diagram (or) patterns from which you may have to develop samples. Samples may be fabric with required knit structure (or) garments with required specification. The merchandiser has to consider all the quality parameters related to the samples to be developed. In case of non-conformities in the samples developed, revised samples may be send for approval purpose. It is the duty of the merchandiser to dispatch the developed samples on to the concerned buyers by means of consistent follow-up.

24. Placements of orders

Priority is given to Approved sub-contractors after evaluation (when the production capacity is not sufficient) order is placed to new manufacturers also orders can be placed to in-house units also. In some companies, merchandiser is accountable (or) responsible to find out the right manufacturers after proper evaluation. At the initial stages small quantity order will be placed. After verifying their performance large quantity orders will be placed. Yarn may be procured by the concerned unit (or) it may be supplied by the supplier (the main manufacturer). In case of CMT order after the confirmation of average piece weight of a particular size, processed fabric is delivered to the concerned unit by the supplier.

25. Taking measures for consistent production

It is the duty of the merchandiser to monitor the merchandising activities in accordance with the production scheduling. He is accountable for the execution of each and every process (or) an operation within the targeted time. He has to take the necessary step for the consistent production by tackling the problems in merchandising. (E.g.)

- ❖ Quality of yarn
- ❖ Replacing good quality yarn
- ❖ Consistent arrangement for fabric
- ❖ Timely arrangements for the timely supply of accessories.
- ❖ Shortage quantities follow up.

26. Preventive actions

Detection of defects is not only the duty of merchandiser. He has to take preventive actions to eliminate deviations in all the stages of merchandising.

27. Attending meetings with superiors

Meetings may be conducted for general discussions about order execution (or) for implementing new systems like ISO (or) it may be a status meeting. In case of production status meeting the production details about various buyers' order will be collected by the merchandiser from different units and will be furnished to superiors. The merchandiser is accountable to answer the various questions raised by the superiors pertaining to the execution of the allotted orders.

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