SAP PM / 06

What Is a Work Center?

Lesson screens · Examples · Exercises

PURPOSE

Separate who plans maintenance, who is responsible for the job, and which resource performs each step. See how capacity and costing connect to this structure.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

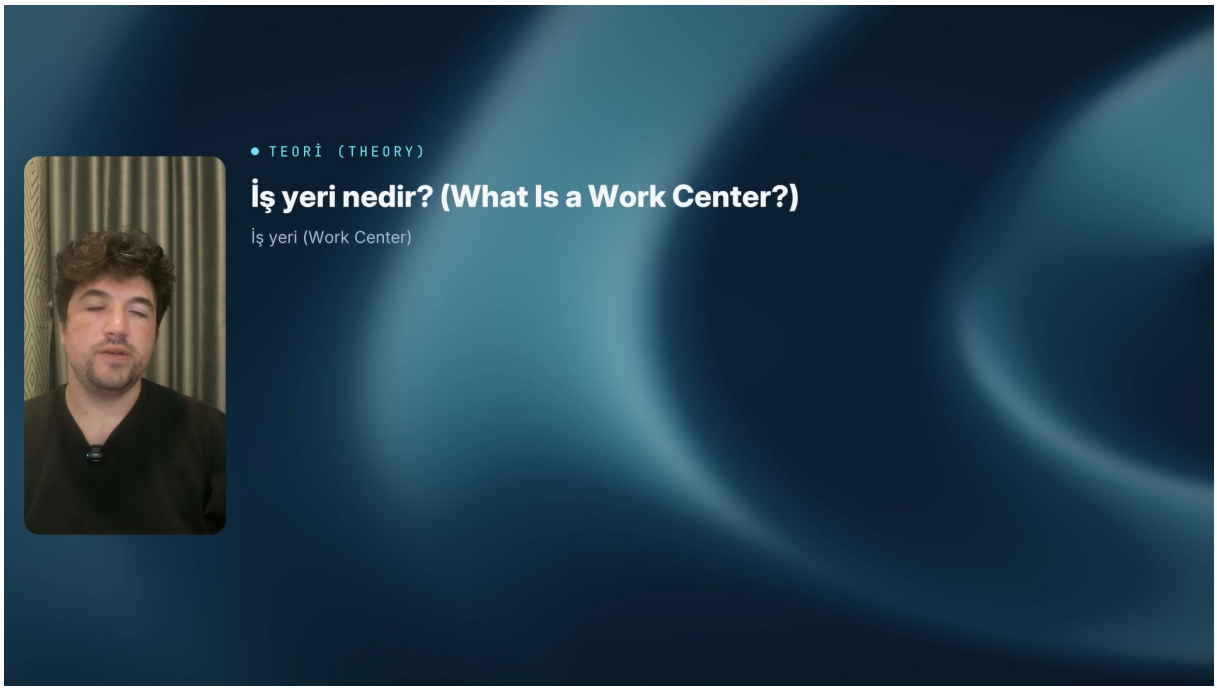
1. Explain planner group versus work center
2. Distinguish main and operation work centers
3. Solve simple capacity and costing examples

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read the explanation, then inspect the related lesson screen. Try the exercises before looking at the answer key. Timestamps below images show the moment in the long lesson from which the frame was taken. Codes belong to the example system; your training environment may use different values.

01

A work center is more than a building



00:22 | The main question: which resource will perform maintenance?

A work center represents a resource that performs work or carries maintenance responsibility. It may represent a maintenance team, workshop, resource group or, in an appropriate scenario, a machine. It should not be understood only as a physical address. Work center data supports work planning, capacity evaluation and labor costing. When defining a work center, clarify its activities and responsibilities, not only its team name.

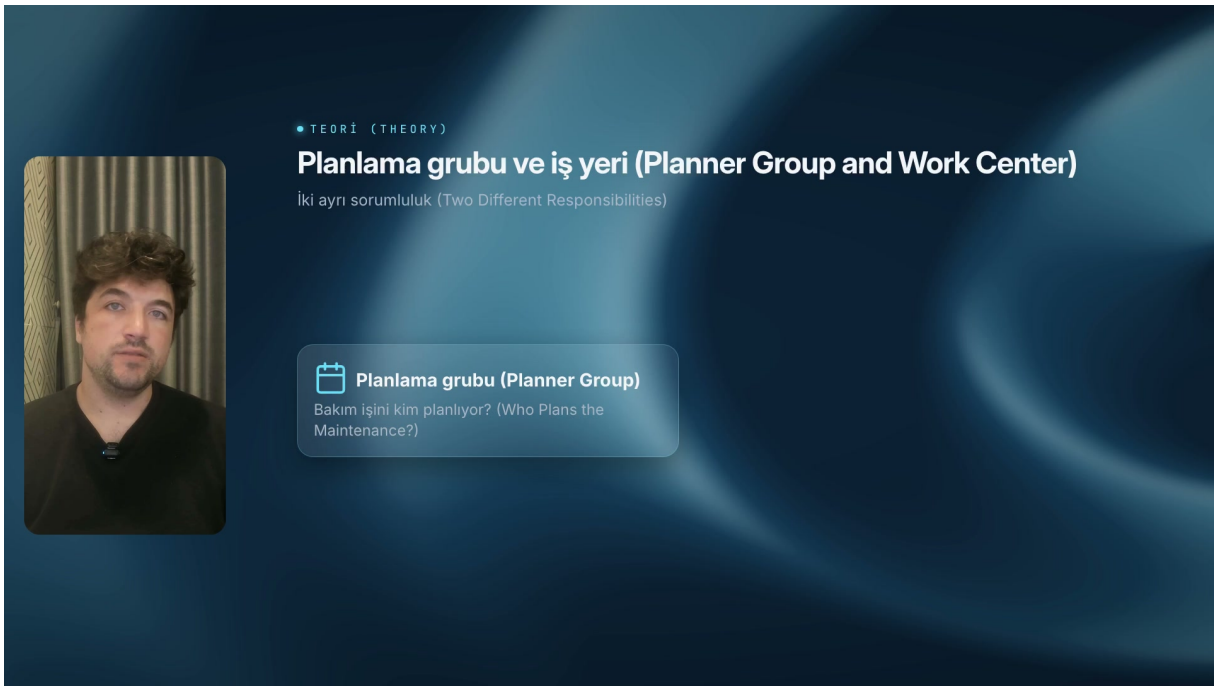
- Resource: a unit capable of performing work
- Responsibility: ownership of the work
- Planning data: links to capacity and costing

REMEMBER

Each employee does not necessarily need a separate work center. The model follows the company’s resource-planning needs.

02

How it differs from a planner group



00:50 | Planning responsibility and the work resource are different concepts.

A planner group identifies responsibility for planning maintenance. A work center relates to work responsibility or the executing resource. The same team can perform both roles, but the fields still mean different things. For example, a central mechanical planning group may prepare the job while a local mechanical maintenance work center performs it. When investigating why work reached the wrong team, first distinguish the meaning of each assignment. Assuming that planners and executors are always the same can confuse responsibility and workload tracking.

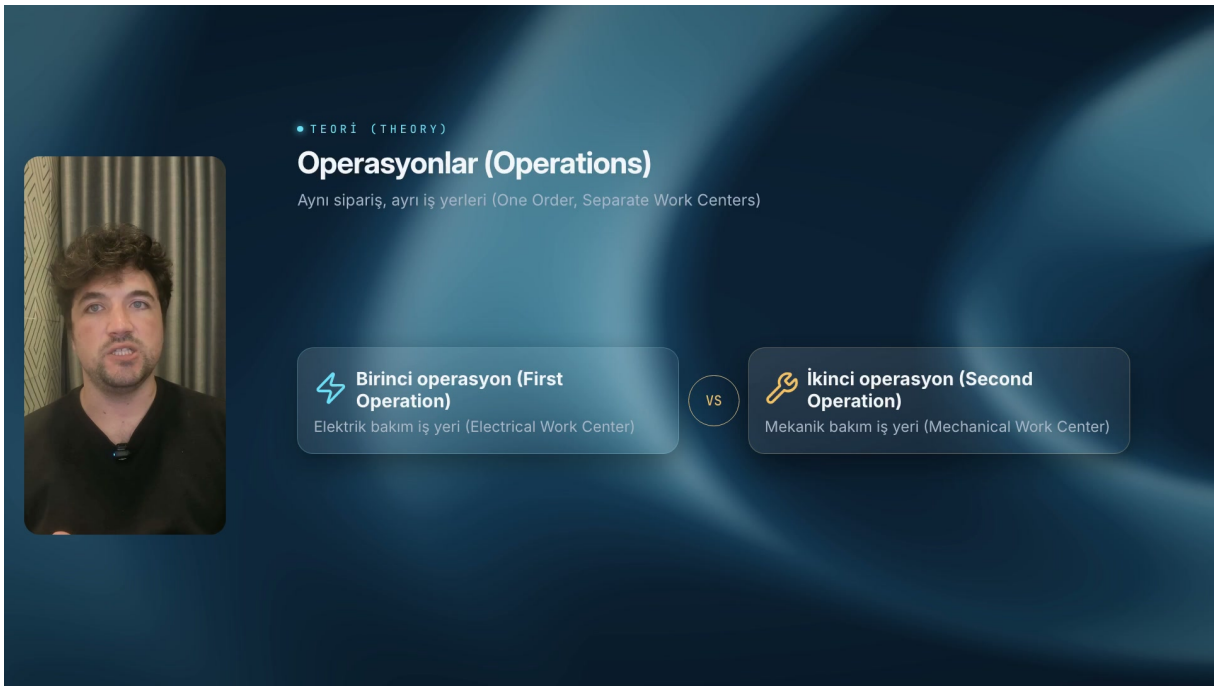
- Planner group: who plans?
- Main work center: who has overall responsibility?
- Operation work center: who performs this step?

REMEMBER

Do not assume that changing the planner group requires changing every operation work center.

03

Main and operation work centers



01:50 | Electrical and mechanical tasks can use different operation resources.

The main work center of a maintenance order can represent overall responsibility. An operation work center identifies the resource for a specific step. Mechanical maintenance may own a packaging-machine job while the electrical team checks electrical components and the mechanical team checks bearings. Different resources can therefore work within one order. The main work center does not have to match every operation work center. There is no fixed number of operations; divide work into meaningful, plannable steps.

- Order header: overall responsibility
- Operation 0010: electrical inspection
- Operation 0020: mechanical inspection

REMEMBER

0010 and 0020 are teaching examples here. Focus on the activity and its resource.

04

A simple way to understand capacity

01

5 people

02

8 hours each

03

40 person-hours

Capacity helps estimate how much work a resource can take in a period. In a simplified example, 5 people working 8 hours each provide 40 person-hours of gross capacity. Not all of it is necessarily available for maintenance: breaks, absence, shifts and availability may matter. If 46 person-hours are planned, demand exceeds even the gross capacity by 6 hours. Actual SAP calculations depend on capacity data and formulas. This example explains the concept; it is not an exact system formula.

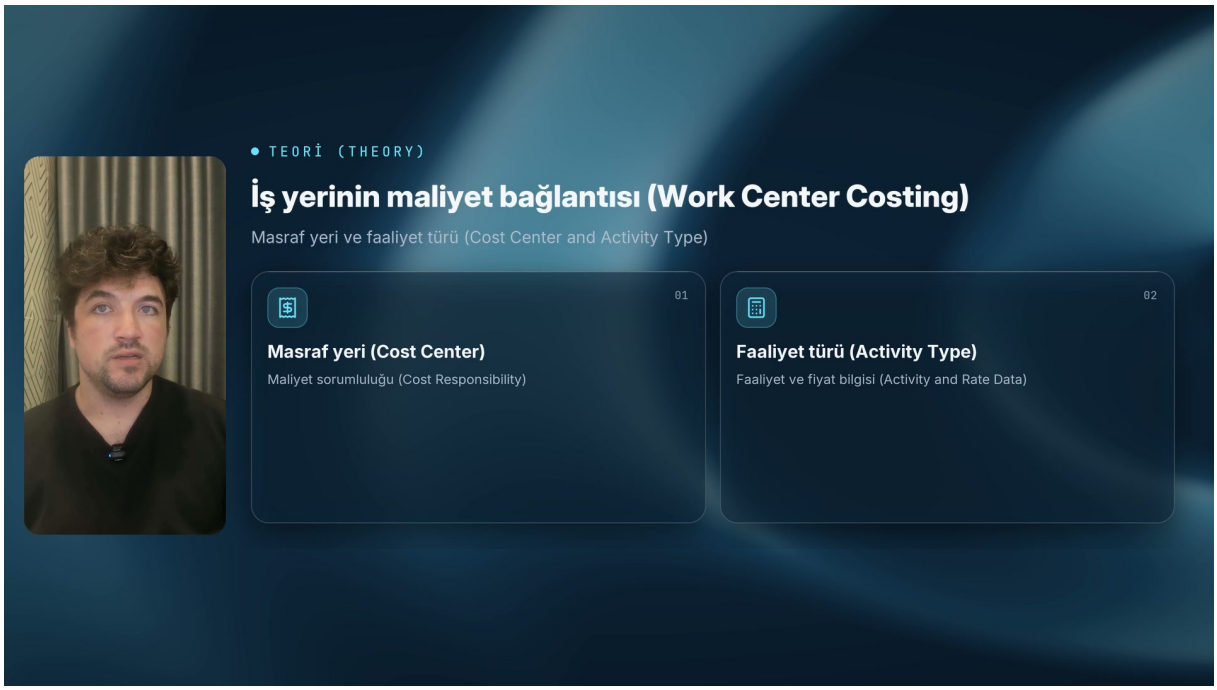
- Gross example: 5 × 8 = 40 person-hours
- Demand: 46 person-hours
- Difference: 6 person-hours overload

REMEMBER

Do not confuse work with elapsed time. Two people working two hours provide 4 person-hours; not every task can be perfectly parallelized.

05

Cost center and activity type



02:53 | The work center's costing connection to cost center and activity type.

Work center assignments to a cost center and activity type can support labor costing. The cost center provides the organizational cost source, while the activity type represents a measured internal activity, such as a mechanical maintenance hour. In a teaching example, 3 hours at TRY 500 per hour gives TRY 1,500 of labor cost. This is not the entire maintenance cost; materials and external services may add more. Prices depend on the period and setup. A CO activity type is not the same concept as a PM maintenance activity type.

- Quantity: 3 hours
- Example rate: TRY 500 / hour
- Example labor cost: TRY 1,500

REMEMBER

This price is a teaching example, not a market rate or the actual price in your system.

06

What should we check in an order?

01

Responsibility

02

Capacity

03

Costing

First check the planner group and the main responsible work center. Then compare each operation description with its selected work center. If an electrical inspection is assigned to a mechanical resource, that should reflect a real responsibility; do not accept it only because it was proposed by default. Compare planned work with capacity and review costing using the relevant quantities and prices. Correct work center master data alone does not produce a correct plan: order and operation data must also be consistent.

- Correct task + correct resource
- Realistic duration and work quantity
- Correct capacity and costing assignments

REMEMBER

The main work center shows overall responsibility; the operation work center shows the task resource. Read them together.

Try it yourself

01 EXERCISE

An order owned by the mechanical team includes electrical and mechanical inspections. How would you assign main and operation work centers?

02 EXERCISE

4 people with 7 net hours each: what is the capacity? What is the difference if 32 person-hours are planned?

03 EXERCISE

Calculate labor cost for 2.5 hours at an example activity rate of TRY 600 per hour.

Answer key

01 SAMPLE ANSWER

The main work center may be mechanical maintenance. The electrical operation may use the electrical work center and the mechanical operation the mechanical work center. Actual assignments follow company responsibilities.

02 SAMPLE ANSWER

4 × 7 = 28 person-hours. 32 - 28 = 4 person-hours overload. This is a simplified capacity example.

03 SAMPLE ANSWER

2.5 × 600 = TRY 1,500 labor cost. This is not total maintenance cost including materials or external services.

Quick glossary and further reading

Main work center	Work center representing overall responsibility
Operation work center	Resource for a specific work step
Capacity	Available ability to perform work in a period
Cost center	Organizational unit for cost tracking
CO activity type	Type of measured internal activity

LESSON AND SCREEN SOURCE

ERPHub · Enes Alku. These expanded notes are based on the related recorded lesson. Teaching scenarios and exercises were prepared for this guide.

OFFICIAL FURTHER READING

SAP Learning - Configure Work Centers ↗

SAP Help - Capacity Requirements Planning in Plant Maintenance ↗

SAP Learning - Configuring an Order Type ↗

Screens come from the lesson's SAP GUI environment. Fields may vary by version, theme, authorization and company configuration. Cloud Public Edition references support the concepts; their menu paths may differ.