

# SAFA Entrepreneurial Lesson

**Product Zero**

# What is Product Zero

---

Product Zero is also often associated with product samples. This essentially is your final rapid prototype, with full functionality. This is what you will send into manufacturers, along with designs and blueprints, so that they can replicate in during production.

Product zero is what allows manufacturers to replicate your innovation in order to produce it in a much larger scale. Manufacturers often use product zero to start production for only a few pieces or a small sample. This product sample is sent back to you, the entrepreneur, in order to confirm the design is what you want before large scale production occurs.

# Product Zero for Quality Assurance

---

Maintaining the quality of your product throughout manufacturing ensures that customers are receiving the proper product with full and proper functionality and appearance.

Product Zero shows manufacturers a baseline of what each item they produce should replicate. At any point, if there is a drop in the quality or the produced goods are differing from your expectations, you can use product zero to compare the items and prove a drop in quality assurance. Having a product zero is a valuable tool in ensuring the success of your company.

# What happens if product zero doesn't match the produced goods anymore?

— — —

In this case you have two options:

1. Communicate with the manufacturers, and possibly be able to return the improper goods for replacements. This is often the favorable path, and you should always try working with the producer to fix this issue before taking further action.
2. If the manufacturer refuses to cooperate or acknowledge a drop in quality, you will be forced to file a lawsuit. This means taking legal action to cover the money you lost because of the drop in quality, but it also means wasting time and money to settle this. It also means you need to find a new manufacturer, which is why this option is unfavorable and should be used as a worst-case scenario.

# Activity Time!

— — —

In your entrepreneur journal, draw a sketch of your product zero. Also label a few key details about your product zero that the manufacturer needs to maintain throughout every piece that is produced.

\*Piece refers to a single item/quantity of your product

# Activity Continued...

— — —

In your entrepreneur journal, in the simplest terms: write down your definition of a product zero.

Share with the person next to you about why product zero is so important in maintaining quality of the products you sell.

Think about how having a product zero is indirectly beneficial for the consumer...

# Sample pieces

---

Sample pieces are another important part of the manufacturing process. After communicating with a manufacturer and sending in your product designs, they will often send you sample pieces. A sample piece is a sample of how the manufacturer will produce the product you sent them.

If you are satisfied with the sample piece, this will become the new product zero. After you confirm that the sample piece is acceptable, you are ready to start manufacturing.

# Sample pieces details/notes

— — —

1. Sample piece(s) come in different quantities. Depending on the size of the bulk order you intent to place, the quantity size of the samples will vary.
  - a. This can range from a single piece, to thousands of samples!
2. When working with international manufacturers, it is important to choose expedited shipping.
  - a. Although your bulk orders will often use the cheapest type of shipping, it is important to save time with the sample pieces by shipping with the fastest option.
  - b. This cost will not be too expensive, because shipping costs are often proportional to the size of the shipment for international. The price you pay for faster shipping will be worth it because of the time you save, which allows you to manufacturer quicker.
3. Sample pieces must be PERFECT! Make sure no issues are in your samples, and if they are, communicate with the manufacturer to implement the changes! You need to do this part before you start manufacturing, or else it will be too late and could lead to a potential upset in consumer experience.