



Your First Year with a Cobot:

What to Expect, Avoid, and Achieve



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Welcome Letter

Dear Manufacturer

If you're thinking about adding your first collaborative robot (cobot), you probably have questions. Not just about specs and capabilities, but about how it will actually impact your operations, your team, and your bottom line.

This guide is built for midsize manufacturers like you. Whether you run a plant with 30 or 300 employees, cobots can help you solve labor challenges, improve consistency, and scale more confidently. But success isn't just about installing a robot—it's about deploying it the right way, with the right mindset, and learning how to keep expanding.

Let's walk through what a real first year with a cobot looks like—month by month, win by win.



The First 30 Days: Setup, Training, & the First Task

What to Expect:

- Cobot arrives and is installed within days
- Task is programmed (usually by hand-guiding)
- Team receives training
- First shift runs with supervision

What to Avoid:

- Choosing a task that's too complex or variable
- Assigning it to a line with frequent interruptions
- Leaving your team out of the process

What You'll Achieve:

- A fully running cobot task (e.g. palletizing, tending, pick-and-place)
- A baseline for cycle time, error rate, and savings
- Your team starts seeing it as a tool, not a threat





Months 2-3 - Optimization, & Buy-In

What to Expect:

- Productivity improves as the team gets comfortable
- Programming becomes more efficient
- Minor adjustments made to workflow



What to Avoid:

- Letting it run on autopilot without monitoring
- Failing to communicate early wins to leadership and staff

What You'll Achieve:

- Stabilized output
- Metrics you can present to leadership (e.g. uptime increase, labor savings)
- Growing internal buy-in for future automation projects

Chapter 3



Months 4–6 – ROI Tracking & Process Expansion



What to Expect:

- Clear data on time savings and consistency
- Interest in using cobots for additional tasks
- Conversations with finance about ROI or expansion

What to Avoid:

- Moving too fast into complex processes
- Ignoring maintenance or operator feedback

What You'll Achieve:

- ROI benchmarks (payback period, labor offset, error reduction)
- A repeatable deployment process
- Greater confidence in your automation capabilities

Chapter 4



Months 7–12 – Scaling, Cross-Training, & Culture Shift



What to Expect:

- Cobots integrated as part of daily workflow
- Operators trained to set up and adjust the system
- Additional tasks selected for automation

What to Avoid:

- Treating your cobot as a “set it and forget it” tool
- Relying on one champion instead of building broad team skillsets

What You'll Achieve:

- Plant-wide awareness and confidence in automation
- Identified opportunities for a second cobot
- A culture of innovation and continuous improvement



First-Year ROI Benchmarks (Based on Real Customers)



- **Labor cost savings:** \$50,000–\$80,000 per cobot per year
- **Uptime improvement:** 15% to 30% on automated lines
- **Defect rate reduction:** 20% to 40% in quality-sensitive tasks
- **Breakeven point:** Often within 6–12 months



What You Need to Succeed in Year One

- A well-chosen, repeatable task
- A trained team (not just one person)
- A plan for measuring success (output, uptime, labor saved)
- A supportive leadership mindset
- A partner who can help when questions come up

**Final Thought: You don't have to figure it all out at once. You just have to start smart.
One task. One robot. One big step forward**