

Operations Manager

LEADERSHIP · O*NET 11-1021.00 · GENERAL AND OPERATIONS MANAGERS

RUN THE DAY-TO-DAY WITH LESS ADMIN AND A CLEARER VIEW OF WHAT'S SLIPPING.

1 YOUR ROLE TODAY

Operations managers keep the business running: people, budgets, processes and the daily problems that don't fit a process. The thinking and the people work stay yours. The reporting, chasing and first-draft writing are where the time comes back.

WHAT THE JOB INVOLVES

- Plan, direct and coordinate day-to-day operations.
- Manage staff, set schedules and assign work.
- Monitor budgets, costs and performance against targets.
- Review reports to spot problems and improve processes.
- Set policies and standards and check they are followed.
- Resolve operational problems and escalations.

SKILLS THAT MATTER MOST

- Coordination
- Monitoring
- Management of personnel
- Time management
- Critical thinking
- Speaking

O*NET job zone: Job Zone 4 — considerable preparation.

2 THE FOUR COPILOT TOOLS

COPILOT CHAT	Free, secure chat. Works from the open web and anything you paste or upload. No access to your internal files unless you give it.
M365 COPILOT	Sits inside Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and Teams. Works on your own emails, files and meetings (only what you already have permission to see).
COPILOT COWORK	You hand over a longer job and it works through the steps, showing progress so you can steer. Good for multi-stage work that used to eat an afternoon.
COPILOT AGENTS	A custom helper you (or IT) set up once to handle a specific, repeatable job — answering a common question, triaging a queue, drafting from a template.

3 AI OPPORTUNITY MAP

Where the four tools fit the real work — with a practical example for each.

TASK	BEST TOOL	PRACTICAL EXAMPLE
Pull a weekly performance summary	M365 COPILOT	In Excel, ask Copilot to summarise the week's numbers and flag what moved most.
Write up a process or standard operating procedure	M365 COPILOT	Turn your rough steps in Word into a clear, numbered procedure your team can follow.
Chase open actions and approvals	COPILOT AGENTS	An agent that follows up outstanding approvals and reports who's holding things up.
Plan a change across several teams	COPILOT COWORK	Delegate a draft rollout plan with steps, owners and risks, built from your project notes.
Prep for a one-to-one or team meeting	M365 COPILOT	Ask Copilot in Teams to recap the last meeting and list the open items.
Answer a quick 'how do we do X' question	COPILOT CHAT	Get a plain-English first answer, then check it against your own policy.

4 SKILLS TO BUILD

The AI-literacy habits this role needs.

- Writing a clear brief so the first draft is close to usable.
- Spotting where a number looks wrong — AI will be confident and still off.
- Choosing repeatable jobs that are worth turning into an agent.
- Keeping a human check on anything that affects people or pay.

5 GETTING STARTED — 3 QUICK WINS THIS WEEK

- ✓ Ask Copilot in Excel to summarise this week's performance and name the biggest change.
- ✓ Draft one procedure you keep explaining out loud, in Copilot in Word.
- ✓ Recap your last team meeting with Copilot in Teams before the next one.

6 GETTING AHEAD — YOUR 90-DAY PLAN

Days 1–30 · Get started	Use M365 Copilot for weekly reporting and meeting recaps. Build a habit of drafting procedures, not writing them cold.
Days 31–60 · Build the habit	Hand one cross-team plan to Cowork. List your top five repeated chores and pick one to automate.
Days 61–90 · Get ahead	Stand up one agent for chasing approvals or actions. Share your saved time with your manager as a simple before/after.

7 WHERE TO LEARN NEXT

Four short intro courses, in order. Start at the top.

- 01** Start with Copilot Chat
The no-risk way in. Ask, draft, summarise, compare. One hour.

02 Work inside M365 Copilot
Use it in the apps you already live in: Outlook, Word, Excel, Teams.

03 Delegate with Copilot Cowork
Hand over the multi-step jobs. Learn to brief, check and steer.

04 Build a Copilot Agent
Turn your most repeated task into a helper that runs itself.

Sources — Occupation overview: O*NET 30.2, occupation 11-1021.00 (oneline.org/link/summary/11-1021.00) and the ESCO occupational profile (esco.ec.europa.eu). Copilot tool descriptions: Microsoft 365 Copilot and Copilot Cowork product documentation, Microsoft, May 2026. AI mapping and pathways: Craig Stanley Studio. Verify figures and policy against your own systems before acting.

