

Communicating Effectively

Facilitator Guide

Effective Communication
Active Listening and Powerful Questioning
Effective Team Meetings
Managing Shift Change Communications

Stepping Up With Excellence Curriculum



Blank Page

Facilitator Guide - Notes

Facilitator notes are placed in text boxes like this one throughout the workbook. All other content in this workbook appears exactly the way the participant will see it, with a few minor spacing differences on pages that have many facilitator note boxes. The facilitator is expected to make his/her own additional notes on pages as necessary during train-the-trainer sessions.

IMPORTANT NOTE

This workbook is designed for use during the workshop and as a reference tool afterward. Participants are encouraged to take notes throughout the workshop so that they can refer back to them at a later date to enhance their comprehension and retention of the material.

Table of Contents

Lesson 1. Effective Communication	3
What Is Communication?	3
B.E.L.I.E.V.E. – How to Get Your Message Across	5
Lesson 2. Active Listening and Powerful Questioning	10
Obstacles to Listening	10
Active Listening	12
Questioning	13
Lesson 3. Effective Team Meetings	16
Planning the Meeting	16
The Agenda	17
Lesson 4. Managing Shift Change Communications	19
Shift Change Information	19
Shift Change Communication Checklist	23

Communicating Effectively

Where we are

At this point, you have been introduced to the Stepping Up With Excellence curriculum and should have a high-level idea of what modules are included in the program. You have also discussed the characteristics of your new role, and the challenges and rewards it can bring.



Module overview

Effective communication is the most critical skill a front line supervisor can possess. We will work on building that skill in this module using group activities and discussions that will allow you to participate in a variety of communication styles and experience the value of active listening. In addition, we will cover creating effective written communications, planning and leading effective team meetings, and managing shift change communications.

Module objectives

Upon successful completion of this module, using information included in this participant guide and any handouts provided, you will be able to accurately:

- Demonstrate effective communication.
- Demonstrate active listening and powerful questioning.
- Describe how to plan effective team meetings.
- Demonstrate effective shift change communications.



WIIFM / WIIFU

Developing effective communication skills will give you some of the most important tools you need in order to ensure your success as a supervisor. The business you are in has significant risks associated with it and the potential consequences of failed communication could be major. The skills you will learn in this module will help you use effective communication to reduce the possibility that these negative consequences might occur. Being a better communicator will also enable you to be more attuned to the needs of your employees and in the process help them to be better communicators. This will, in turn, provide a greater potential for the success of your unit.



Find out what is really painful to them in their world (i.e., handling safety issues) and tie in ways that effective communication can help reduce the impact of these problems and even prevent them entirely. Stress the WIIFU piece.

Notes

 **Leading Thoughts** 
... in supervisory development.

"Leaders who make it a practice to draw out the thoughts and ideas of their subordinates and who are receptive even to bad news will be properly informed. Communicate downward to subordinates with at least the same care and attention as you communicate upward to superiors." ~**L.B. Belker**

Use this quote as a starting point for this module. Possibly have a participant read the quote and then tie the concept into what's coming up in the lessons that follow.

Notes

Lesson 1. Effective Communication

Lesson Overview

This lesson focuses on what communication is and how it is accomplished. You will learn about things you can do to ensure your communication is effective, and you will have a chance to demonstrate some of these techniques.

Remember to look for participant actions or words that can be used to illustrate the Leadership Bank Account.

Lesson Objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define what communication means and where responsibility for it resides.
- List the seven components of communication necessary in order for your message to be received and believed.
- Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication.



What Is Communication?

Activity



Communication – what it is – what it isn't

We have all participated in conversations, thinking that our message was clear, only to find out that the receiver had a completely different understanding than was our intent. Why does this happen? And more importantly, how can we prevent it?

The lesson begins with the “How to put on a jacket” activity which demonstrates the need for more than just speaking words when true communication is desired. (Materials needed: Large jacket.) See activities packet for facilitation and debrief

The definition of true communication is when the receiver has understood the message in exactly the way the sender intended. Because of all the elements that are involved, this can sometimes be a bit tricky to achieve.

Key Question

Which is a more effective means of communicating: verbally or non-verbally?



Have a participant read the question and use it as a start for the following discussion. Suggest that both are usually needed.

Notes

Ask for responses from the group. Acknowledge whatever they give and ask for other opinions. Then suggest that it may be 100%; each participant in the communication must be **equally 100% responsible to ensure that true communication happens.**

If the other person drops the ball, you need to pick it up. It doesn't matter whether you're the sender or receiver.

Ask for ideas from the class as a whole and post their ideas on the flip chart. Try to guide them to bring out some of the seven components of communication covered in the next lesson.

Who is responsible?

Whose responsibility is it to ensure that communication has truly happened? Is there a shared responsibility? What do YOU think?

Sender _____ %
Receiver _____ %

How do you make sure your message gets across?

Let's see if we can identify some of the components of communication, beyond just the words themselves. What are some of these components?

B.E.L.I.E.V.E.tm – How to Get Your Message Across

How do you get people to listen, hear, and understand – or believe – your message? The seven components of verbal communication are:

B	Body Language
E	Eye Contact
L	Listen
I	Involve the Receiver
E	Empathize
V	Vocal Tone
E	Explain Clearly

Body Language

Body language and facial expression are powerful components of communication, often more meaningful to the receiver than the words themselves, especially when the words and body language are not consistent. What kinds of things do you think of when we talk about body language and communication?

Here are some examples of body language signals that can cause problems for communication. How can we overcome them?

- Poor posture can signal low self-esteem or a lack of energy.

Notes



Ask for ideas from the class as a whole. No need to flip-chart for this exercise.



Review information in the text box for each item. Use your judgment as to whether to ask for additional info from participants. Some of these can be covered quickly.

Instead, try to stand (or sit) tall and keep your weight forward to indicate interest. It's important not to lean too far forward, however, or you will risk invading the receiver's personal space.

Notes

Try to keep arms relaxed at your sides when standing or with hands visible on a table or your lap when seated.

A smile will help people feel more comfortable with you and be more likely to trust what you say. Beware of "fake smiles," however. People can usually tell the difference and a fake smile will do more damage than no smile if people catch on and perceive you as phony, insincere, or untrustworthy. What would that do to your Leadership Bank Account balance?

Ask how a person could get rid of the habits mentioned. Bring out having someone observe and give feedback, paying or closer attention. Also let people know that studies show that it takes 21 days of new behavior to break a habit, so stick with the process when trying to get rid of some of these habits that impact communication.

- Folded arms say "My mind is made up. I'm not going to listen to anything you have to say."

- Facial expressions are important as well. A frown or blank expression makes communication more challenging.

- Nervous gestures or speech patterns – wringing hands, tapping pencil or pen, heavy sighing, repeatedly saying "umm," or "you know?" – are very distracting to the listener and tend to be habits we have created over time. What other distracting habits can you think of?

When using body language to read someone else's involvement in communication, always remember that there may be other causes than those mentioned above. Poor posture could be caused by a bad back. Folded arms may just be saying "I'm cold." Do not make evaluations in a vacuum. Take everything into consideration.

Notes

Eye Contact

It's important to remember that accepted norms for eye contact are culture-dependent. In our culture, most people hold eye contact in a conversation with an individual for between five and 15 seconds. When you are the speaker, it is usually acceptable to maintain that contact for less time than when listening. In a group setting, it is typical to spend four to five seconds.

When we get nervous or feel like we're under pressure, we often glance around rapidly, as if we were a frightened animal looking for a means of escape. This will usually make the listener uncomfortable and our message will not be received as intended.

For the most impact, try to hold eye contact for five to 10 seconds at a time. This would be most natural in one-to-one communication, although it would work in group settings as well. The length should be natural for you and be more than just glancing at the person but not long enough that it might be intimidating or suggest an inappropriate intimacy.

What could you do if you're really uncomfortable making eye contact with someone to still achieve the same benefit?

Listen

There's a whole lesson on active listening coming up – that's how critical this component is to communication. It's not just important when you're the receiver, though. As the sender of a message, you need to listen to how your receiver is responding in order to determine if your message is being received and understood in precisely the way you intended.

Pay attention to any questions or comments the receiver may have. Don't rehearse the next thing you're going to say, or plan your weekend trip to your favorite fishing spot. Also, be aware if the receiver isn't saying anything. This could be a warning sign.

We will talk more about active listening techniques in the next lesson.

There are cultural perspectives that should be considered in non-verbal communication. Eye contact is a good example of how different cultures view body language. This course will not cover these cultural differences because it is a very complex topic, but be aware that you may be sending different signals than you intend if you are in a cultural environment different from your own.

Try looking at the middle of their forehead just above their eyes, or at their nose or mouth. They will usually think you're holding eye contact. Be careful, though. Limit the time looking here, just as if you were looking at their eyes.

Notes

Guide discussion to some of these:

- Have positive eye contact.
- Check in – ask non-accusatory questions.
- Have something for them to look at.
- Know what the benefit is to your receiver and focus on that.

“I feel your pain because I have experienced it myself.” This is true empathy. It goes beyond sympathy.

Bring out that these things tend to result in people losing interest or tuning the speaker out.

Give them the additional info for each item.

Volume: vary it – not too soft OR too loud and not all the same level

Tone, pitch, and speed: tone, pitch, and speed – When we’re excited our pitch or tone often rise and we speak faster. Think about using these techniques purposely to hold the listener’s attention.

Use emphasis: in the right places. Monotone will put people to sleep.

Relax: neck and shoulder muscles in order to relax your voice.

Pause: in appropriate places. Moving along too fast will lose people as quickly as stopping for too long or in the wrong place.

Involve the Receiver

It is absolutely critical that the receiver is engaged in the communication process. What are some things you can do to ensure this is happening?

Empathize

True communication only happens when the sender can place the message into the context of the receivers’ world. Be sensitive to the impact it may have on them, either positive or negative, and understand that their response may be different from yours. Another way to explain this is that it is important to care about what the receivers hear in the message.

Vocal Tone

Did you ever take a class or workshop where you had to strain to hear the instructor? Ever have a teacher whose voice was a monotonous droning tone? Usually when we’re engaged and excited about something, we naturally use a variety of vocal tone and volume in our conversations. It is important to bring this same variety into our communications at work as well. What is it we should do?

Volume _____

Tone, pitch and speed _____

Use emphasis _____

Relax _____

Pause _____

Notes

Explain Clearly

This is where the actual words enter the equation. Ensure that the information you want to convey is explained clearly and completely. Use whatever reference materials are appropriate, but be careful not to overwhelm the person with data that is not critical to understanding your message.

The Result?

If the message is to be received and accepted by the listener, all seven of these components of communication must be in place.

It is when the words do not match body language that there is potential for communication failure.

Be Authentic

Although this isn't a part of the acronym, it may be even more important than any of the elements already mentioned. The fastest way to kill communication (and make withdrawals from your Leadership Bank Account) is to be perceived as phony. The second-fastest way is to actually BE phony. Be yourself – just be the best representation of yourself.

Written vs. Verbal

Which should you use? Sometimes the decision has been made for you. For instance, entries in the log, accident reports, or notes of unacceptable behavior in an employee's file. But it's not always that clear.

Let them know that there is more information about what kinds of written records they should keep when we get to the HR/Legal module.

Think about the reason you would write rather than talk. When the communication is official, very complex, or has the potential for long-term impact, you will probably want to choose a written form. There are a number of different choices, and your company most likely has specific formats for each. Often a combination of verbal with written follow up will be the appropriate way to ensure that true communication occurs.

Leadership Bank Account™

Clearly there are several ways that communication can create deposits in your Leadership Bank Account™. We'll see more as we continue through this module.



Point out the areas of the Leadership Bank Account that can be most affected by communication, both positive and negative.

Notes

Lesson 2. Active Listening and Powerful Questioning

Lesson Overview

We have discovered that communication only happens when the message is received as the sender intended. This lesson focuses on using active listening and powerful questioning techniques to enhance the likelihood that true communication will occur.

Lesson Objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- List the types of obstacles to listening
- Demonstrate the components of active listening
- List and describe the different types of questions and how to use them to improve understanding

Obstacles to Listening

Why do we so often have difficulty really listening to what someone is saying? Why is it that our minds wander to what we're having for dinner or whether our team will win the big game?

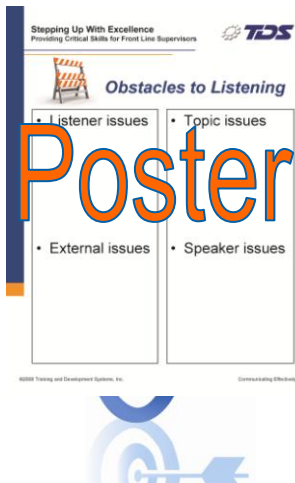
People speak at an average speed of 110 – 150 words per minute.

The average person listens and understands at an average speed of 600 plus words per minute.

The mind clearly does not need to expend all of its attention on the speaker, so all this extra time tends to get shifted to other things – like preparing our response or daydreaming about our next vacation. We must consciously work to keep this from happening.

There are often additional factors that impact how well we listen and understand what is being said. Obstacles to listening can be categorized into four groups:

- Listener issues
- External issues
- Topic issues
- Speaker issues



Read these two sentences:
 “Most people speak about 150 words per minute. People listen at an average of 600 words per minute.”

Then pause and distribute 3x5 cards while saying nothing. When cards are all handed out, ask everyone to write down **exactly** what you just said. When everyone is finished, re-read the two sentences and ask how many got them perfect. This is an example that even when we think we are listening, we are often not giving full attention.

Review the sentences. What does our mind do with the extra time it has? We plan our response, write our grocery list, think about the weekend activities, etc.

Be sure to get this point across.

Notes

“When you develop an attitude of seeking to understand others first before trying to express your views, you become someone others trust.” ~ “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Stephen R. Covey (by permission)

What are some obstacles to listening that might fall into each of these categories?

Listener issues

External issues (i.e., environment, etc.)

Topic issues

Speaker issues

Overcoming external issues may require a change of location, time, or other factors in order to achieve true communication. Some speaker issues can be avoided by using skills covered in the previous lesson. The other elements here can usually be addressed through active listening and powerful questioning, which, coincidentally, are the next two topics in this lesson.



List one issue for each type and then have them discuss in table groups. Give three minutes and have them flip chart at their tables. Bring them back and ask for one or two items for each category from different tables. No need to review everything they have. The following are some ideas.

Listener issues:

tired, bored, not feeling well, has problems at home, be thinking about work, dislike the speaker, disagree with speaker

External issues:

Control room noise, interruptions, discomfort, other people talking, temperature of room, time of day, problems with radio/background noise

Topic issues:

Complex/difficult to understand, controversial, unfamiliar, too simple/boring

Speaker issues:

Monotone, volume of voice too low, distracting mannerisms or vocal habits, disorganized, distracted

Move them fairly quickly into active listening as a way to overcome some of these obstacles.

Notes

Active Listening

What is active listening? Pretty much what it says it is – being an active participant in the communication process, rather than a passive receiver. There are several “activities” that a listener can do to enhance the process, some of which will be familiar from the previous lesson.

Bring these out verbally so they can write them in their books. Use your judgment as to whether to ask them for more. Speak “listening words” – “uh-huh,” “I hear you,” “tell me more,” etc. Don’t interrupt. Watch THEIR body language. Listen for what is NOT said (ideas, emotions). Keep an open mind.

- Lean slightly forward.
- Appear alert – BE alert.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Nod head.
- Listen more than you speak.
- Take notes of key points.

Here are some more:

Ask for volunteers to share what they think each means and help guide them to these:
Mirroring – The receiver uses similar vocal tone and repeats sender’s last words, occasionally with a questioning inflection. Mirroring encourages sender to say more without risk of distorting the message.
Summarizing – More than mirroring. Identify key points and restate them back at appropriate times. Don’t just parrot them. Put them into your own words. This way, you check back to ensure you are receiving the intended message.

There are some more tools that you might use to help you better understand the message. What do you think these might mean?

Mirroring

Summarizing

Questioning

It's a lot easier for us to answer questions than ask them because that's what we're conditioned to do as we grow up. However, one of the most powerful ways to ensure that you understand a sender's message as intended is to ask. Questioning is a great way to gain information in almost every situation, and it's also a great way to get someone to think about the topic at hand.

Types of questions

The two basic types are open questions and closed questions. Within the open category is another type called probing questions that can be useful when you need more information or to clarify an answer.

Ask: Why would we include the key questions at various points in this course? Asking questions can prompt people to think and discover their own ideas about something.

Question Type	Description	Example
Closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a brief, or one word answer such as "yes" or "no" Closes off discussion Usually begins with "Is," "Can," "How many," "Did," or "Does" 	<p>"Did you check the discharge pressure on the reflux pump?"</p> <p>"Can you stay late?"</p> <p>"Did you finish the job I gave you?"</p> <p>"Is there enough time?"</p>
Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires more than a "yes" or "no" answer Stimulates thinking Promotes discussion Usually begins with "What," "How," "When," or sometimes "Why" 	<p>"What could happen if you don't check the pressure?"</p> <p>"How do you know whether the safety procedures have been followed?"</p> <p>"What do you need in order to finish the job?"</p>
Probing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A type of open question, usually asked after something has been said Can be framed as a statement Encourages the speaker to keep talking Helps get clarification 	<p>"Please tell me more about that."</p> <p>"What else can you do to ensure that it is done correctly?"</p>

Notes



Distribute cards to tables. Let them know that each table needs to come up with one or two questions from their environment for each type shown here and write one on each card. Give them three or four minutes and have them share one example of each type.

Discuss specific instances in their environment where they would use each type of question.

Example:
 If there is an emergency and you need immediate information, a closed question is probably appropriate. "Did you close the relief valve?" "Was there a spill?" Later, when trying to figure out why it happened, you might switch to open or probing. "What were the things that you did immediately before and after the incident?" "Tell me more about the steam leak."

Cover these quickly. Stress that it's often the tone used with the words that determines the meaning the receiver takes from them.

Specifically, what are some ways that you think you might be able to use these types of questions in your role as front line supervisor?

Closed Questions

Open Questions

Probing Questions

Words that build barriers

We can follow all of the processes we have learned so far in this module and still, with the use of one word or phrase and a particular tone of voice, undo all the positive communication we have begun to establish. There are words and phrases which are often understood to be accusatory or demeaning, whether they are intended that way or not. You will probably want to steer clear of these in most situations.

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| But! | You always... | I'm trying to... |
| You should... | You never... | Right... Wrong... |
| Why do you... | Try to... | The ONLY way... |
| Why don't you... | | |

Some of these phrases take on different meanings, depending on the tone or attitude with which they are delivered. In any case, you would be wise to use them sparingly or you may end up withdrawing funds from your Leadership Bank Account.

Notes

Words that build bridges

On the other hand, there are words and phrases that generally help to create a positive atmosphere for communication.

When, how, what, which, where ...	I would like...
What do you think about...	I feel...
Tell me more...	Yes, I see...
Please go on...	Help me understand...

Again, the way in which you use these words and the tone with which you say them will combine to determine how they are taken by the receiver. Whatever words you use, it's critical to think through how you are using them in order to ensure you are sending the message you really want to have received.

Leadership Bank Account™

How can you use active listening and powerful questioning to make deposits to your Leadership Bank Account?

Stress that it's all about caring and being authentic.



Ask the question from the workbook - short discussion. Just get a couple of examples. No need to flip chart.

Activity

Communication Practice

Now you'll have an opportunity to practice what you've learned in these past two lessons.



See the activity packet for activity and debrief instructions. (Material Needed: Timer).

Notes

Lesson 3. Effective Team Meetings

Lesson Overview

As a supervisor, you will now be responsible to lead your team in meetings for a variety of purposes. There are some things you can do in all cases that will help ensure your meetings are organized, well run, and achieve their stated purposes. This lesson will provide you with information to help you plan a meeting and create an agenda.

Lesson Objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Create a meeting planning checklist.
- Describe the benefits of having an agenda and list some of the elements that should be included.



Have a participant read the question and use it as a start for the following discussion.

Key Question

If you were going to call a meeting, what could you do in advance to make sure you would know whether that meeting was successful?

Planning the Meeting

Many of your meetings will be short and informal. In these cases, you may not need to use all of the steps we will discuss. We talk about it here so you'll have the ideas for when you do need to plan a formal meeting. Plus, you can use some things for your less formal meetings as needed. Why is it important to create a plan at all? What are your thoughts?

What kinds of things would you include in your meeting plan? Remember that these are general items and may not ALL be needed for every meeting.

Briefly discuss what could happen if there isn't a plan.

- You might not cover everything.
- People might not come if you didn't get the information out.
- You might not have needed supplies.

Notes

Meeting Planning Checklist

Here are some suggestions for items that you might include on a meeting planning checklist. Add any others that seem appropriate to you.

- What is the reason for the meeting?
- What are the desired results?
- List bullet items to discuss and their order.
- Set date, time, location and length of meeting.
- Who should attend – required/optional/information only?
- Who should lead the meeting?
- When should you notify meeting attendees?
- Should you distribute the agenda before the meeting?
- What items should be on the agenda?
- Will there be handouts? Who will create?
- Is an overhead projector or computer needed?
- Will there be food? If so, who will provide it?
- Will there be a cost? How much? Who pays and how?
- Who will take notes and/or record minutes?
- Will notes/minutes be distributed? By whom?
- Is there any other “pre-work” that needs to be assigned?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Briefly cover these. They probably won't need all of these for every meeting, but it's good to think about whether they do or not each time.



The Agenda

Developing an agenda is important because it helps to focus the discussion and keep you on track and on time. There is no one format that is best in every situation, so you have some latitude in that area. It is important to capture the framework and flow that you want the meeting to have.

Notes

Ask them if there are other things they might include on an agenda. Possible additional items might be:

- Assign a person to take notes (unless already done).
- Read minutes of previous meeting (if applicable).
- List action items resulting from the meeting and who is to do what by when (if applicable).

Components of an effective agenda

Your agenda is probably complete if it includes most or all of the following elements.

- Date and time of the meeting
- Purpose of the meeting
- Bullet list of topics to be covered and who will cover them (possibly with space for notes)
- Review of meeting purpose and whether it was accomplished
- Date and time of next meeting (if applicable)

Sample Shift Change Meeting Agenda

Daily Shift Meeting (Date/Time)

1. Safety Issues
 - Comments/items from crew members
 - Other regulatory items
2. Review Daily Orders
 - Items needing clarification
3. Ongoing maintenance items
 - Items requiring maintenance from previous shift
4. Review items noted in shift log by previous shift
 - Review status of each area of unit
 - Other issues/items from previous shift

This agenda is very simple, straightforward, and to the point. The title gives the purpose of the meeting, the date and time and topics to be discussed. Even though it doesn't have all of the components listed above, it is an effective agenda because it provides enough detail to give the meeting participants an idea of what they will cover and in what order.

Lesson 4. Managing Shift Change Communications

Lesson Overview

Ensuring that information is communicated correctly from one shift to another is absolutely essential in order to maintain a safe, productive environment. This lesson will provide suggestions and tools that you can use to enhance this critical communication process.

Lesson Objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Discuss the types of information needed in shift change communications and describe ways to ensure they are received.
- Create a communication checklist for operators to use during shift change that will help ensure all important information is conveyed.



Shift Change Information

Performance objectives for your business will drive the kind and volume of communications you need around your shift changes. Regardless, there is a minimal level of information that must be passed from one shift to the next in order for the work to get done safely. The responsibility for overcoming the challenges that are involved in this process now falls on your shoulders.

Audio/video clip placeholder.



Key Question

How do the things you've learned so far in this module tie into shift change communication?



Have a participant read the question and use it as a start for the following discussion.

Notes

It is critical to ensure that enough time is allocated for shift change communication. Operators are eager to get home at the end of their shift, and the person coming on may not be really ready to jump right into their day. Are there any other reasons why this could be an issue? How can you address it?

Challenges sometimes arise when operators become complacent. They do the same things over and over and sometimes don't notice issues unless they have become a very big problem. Consequently they don't communicate what they haven't seen. What can you do to reduce this possibility?

If an operator has done something that has caused a minor problem, they might not want to report it for fear of the consequences. We hope that every operator would report an issue that had HSSE consequences, but minor issues they might "forget to mention." How might you encourage people to come forward when there's a small issue that could eventually turn into a larger one?

Let them know that there will be modules later in the curriculum that will provide some skills in coaching and managing performance.

Challenges to Shift Change Communication

Everyone realizes that communication between shifts is critical. Even so, there are things that get in the way. Here are a few possibilities.

- Limited time available

Bring out that, in both this case and the next, there should be some mechanism to tell the operator the level of detail that you need and want from their shift change communication, as well as the method for them to get it to you.

- Boredom / fatigue

- Embarrassment or fear of reprimand

Notes

Getting the Information You Need

It's no secret that there are challenges involved in communicating between shifts. So far in this module you have learned a lot of general communication skills that will come in handy as you do everything you can to ensure successful reliefs.

One of the most important things you can do is not waiting until the end of your shift to know what's going on in your unit. In the early 1980's a "new" philosophy of leadership became popular. It was dubbed "MBWA," or "Management By Wandering Around." This method of leadership is just as valid today as it was then. Spending time in your unit, talking with your employees throughout the shift, and staying on top of what's happening at all times will be your most powerful tools in getting the information you need to pass along to your relief at the end of the shift. By doing this yourself and passing along excellent information to the next shift, you set the tone for others to provide you with better information as well.

Supervisor-to-Supervisor Communication

Whether you are a day shift supervisor handing off to the night shift during the middle of a rotation or are coming back from a long change or vacation, there is information you need to provide or receive in order to do your job.

Let's look at what information needs to be communicated if you're handing off. Most organizations require safety to be the number one item, so we'll assume that's at the top of the list. What additional things can you think of that would be important?

MBWA is from the book In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies, by Tom Peters and Bob Waterman, 1982

Everyone agrees that the problem is that the "other" supervisor is not sharing information. How do we change that?

"BE the change you wish to see..." (Gandhi)

Make sure YOU are not the "other" supervisor.

Find out if the term "rotation" in referring to the shift cycle is appropriate for their business. Change it in your language if not.

Have them write their own ideas in the book and then bring back for a large group discussion. Flip chart the answers. Examples:

- Unit performance toward objective
- Abnormal operations
- Maintenance issues
- Personnel changes/issues
- Rundown tank levels
- Product or chemical transfers
- What's pressing for the next shift
- What has to happen on next shift in order to get the work done

Notes

Continue to write individually and then discuss as a large group and flip chart. Here are a few more examples:

- What are the production needs for the week/month?
- What are current operating rates?
- What are the volume requirements for production or product?
- Are there any regulatory inspections coming up?
- What are the key emphasis areas for the next shift?

What if you're coming back from a long change? What kinds of additional information would you need? (Again, safety is the first item.)

Supervisor shift change communication is typically done one-on-one with the other supervisor. If you are the supervisor coming off shift, you should already be aware of any issues that your operators will be sharing with their own reliefs. That way you will be able to relay this information to your own counterpart. It is important that you allow enough time for all the issues to be adequately communicated, and that you use all of the skills you have learned in earlier parts of this module to ensure that the message has been received as intended.

Operator-to-Operator Communication

Operator-to-operator shift change communication is often the weakest in the plant. However, each operator must have certain information about what is happening in their area. What are some of the things your operators need to communicate between shifts?

Lead a short large group discussion to bring up things operators should communicate. Examples:

- HSSE incidents/close calls
- Equipment performance
- Maintenance issues
- What's pressing for the next shift
- What has to happen on next shift in order to get the work done

Bring out that the list is similar to that of the supervisor, but is focused on one operator's area of responsibility.

You should already know what each of your operators ought to be sharing with their relief so you are able to communicate that to the next shift supervisor.

Notes



Team Communication

Shift change meetings are a way you as the supervisor can ensure that you receive all of the information you and your operators need from the previous shift in order to be safe and successful. What should you include?

Say something like: At your table, take three minutes to talk about what you include or think you should include in your shift change team meetings. Compare notes with the others at your table to see if there are elements that you could incorporate to make your meetings even stronger. If the meeting content is the same, ask how others gather information from their operators.

Shift Change Communication Checklist

Ideally, communication style and tools should be the same across shifts and between units. You may not be in a position to make this happen everywhere but, if you develop a process that works very well, it may just be something that will spread to other supervisors. You always want to ensure that your own management approves of the tools and methods you decide to use. Here are some suggestions for a checklist that your operators could use at the end of their shift to ensure that they have communicated adequately with their relief.

- List any variances from normal production.

- List any health, safety, security, or environmental issues.

- List any maintenance issues.

- List any other issues, problems, or concerns that should be brought to the relief's and supervisor's attention.

Ask participants if they already have something like this checklist. If so, ask them to share what's on it.

On this example: Note that their checklist should have a space for the operator to write something if there is an issue. Let participants know that they should limit their checklist to no more than five or six items or the operators will not take the time to follow it. Remember one of the challenges in giving or getting adequate information at shift change is the amount of time available.

Ask participants what benefits there could be in having some kind of checklist for operators to complete at shift change.

Leadership Bank Account™

How can you use the skills in this lesson to avoid making withdrawals from your Leadership Bank Account? How can you use them to make deposits?



