

4D^S Learning From Everyday Work – Leader Led Safety Conversation

Traditionally, 'safety' is thought to be present when the number of unacceptable outcomes (work that doesn't go well) are as low as possible. From this perspective, looking at normal work involves Leaders judging those who do the work as 'good' or 'bad' based on fixed ideas and prescriptions of how the work should be done. Leader-led Safety Conversations are different. They are about Leaders learning from those who do the work and helping to ensure the number of acceptable outcomes (work that goes well) is as high as possible. By wanting to learn and improve the work environment in this way, we create the opportunity for learning at the worker, workgroup and organizational levels.

01

Plan and prepare

You are taking time from your workday and the workday of your frontline workers. Time is valuable and must have purpose and meaning. Your engagement as a leader with the frontline to have a safety conversation should focus on part of a job, process or activity from normal everyday work that you want to learn from. It could be routine or high-risk work.

03

Ask Curious Questions (Use the 4D's)

Use the 4D's to engage storytelling with the frontline workers about the "rubs" with normal work, such as; When doing that work, can you share with me when;

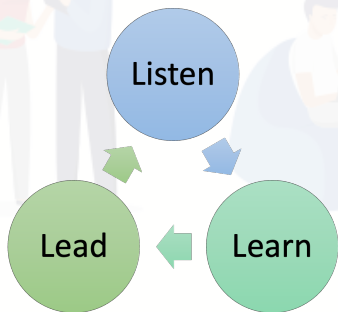
- That work didn't make sense to you (**DUMB**)
- Doing that work didn't feel right/safe (**DANGEROUS**)
- The work was harder than normal (**DIFFICULT**)
- The work was **DIFFERENT** from what it normally is.

DANGEROUS
DIFFICULT
DUMB
DIFFERENT

05

Explore opportunities, share learnings, follow through

Themes will emerge from the storytelling, give yourself some space "soak time" to reflect on what you have learnt. Continue the safety conversation about possible improvements after soak time. Then share those learnings with others, so you can explore the opportunities that could lead to activities to create improvements (such as a Learning Team) and follow through with the group. Using a Learning Team with those that do the work, creates sustainable change.



02

Focus on system and processes, not people

Going to where normal everyday successful work is performed, is not a performance evaluation for workers or contractors. A leader safety conversation is meant for engaging with the frontline, recognizing workers as the experts of normal work, asking curiosity-based questions, which makes visible the gap between WAI (WAI is the way the organization thinks the work is done) and WAD (WAD is the way workers actually do the work).

04

Don't suggest change or rush to a fix

The safety conversation is for engaging, listening and learning. Any improvements or actions (even if they feel obvious to you) comes later. Fixing is easy and obvious, creating sustainable change through continuous improvement is a cycle of learning and improving for workers, the workgroups and the organization.

06

Mix it up and repeat

Schedule these safety conversations at different times of the work-day. Mixing it up helps you to see how things change throughout the day, week or month.