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**Relationship-Based Safety: Moving Beyond Culture & Behavior**

By Rosa Antonia Carrillo

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| 1) Dissatisfaction | • Dissatisfaction with the current experience is creating a desire for change. Neither the preferred outcomes nor the nature of the obstacles is yet clear. The beginning is a time for mental preparation including the awareness that what you have believed to be true could keep you from seeing the truth now and shedding expectations about the situation or potential outcomes. Judging and blaming are obstacles to freedom of expression.  
• The leadership actions to embed new values lie primarily in the hands of management. SH&E staff authority lies in technical expertise, interpersonal skills and ability to help the organization be clear about who is sponsoring the pursuit of excellence in SH&E. Staff members do not have programs—sponsors do. The staff helps others achieve their goals. | • Get clear on the impact of the problem and its consequences.  
• Enlist allies who agree.  
• Enlist sponsors for change (line managers only). |
| 2) Engagement | • Engagement is the path to developing a common understanding of the problem and acceptable approaches to solutions. To do this the questions must go beyond what is/is not working to uncovering the beliefs that have formed around why things do/do not work. Arriving at a common sense of the problem allows for the development of common-sense solutions that are more likely to be embraced. Training supervisors to listen, act, and give and receive feedback, along with repeated demonstrations of commitment eventually enroll engagement.  
• Face-to-face communication is most effective. When working with virtual teams and to control costs, use interactive technology. | • Face-to-face communication.  
• Educational seminars on impact of relationships, drift and communication on safety.  
• Teach supervisors and their direct reports communication skills for everyday work.  
• Institute skills into job planning and safety meetings. |
| 3) Inquiry | • Gather people in intact work groups and with other groups that affect each other. Include others who understand the larger picture. We cannot solve the complex problems we have created with yesterday’s beliefs. Trained facilitators are needed to help participants maintain a state of awareness free of expectations or projections. The focus is on asking the right questions. Encourage going beyond appearance to the invisible dynamics that affect people’s interpretation of events and decisions (e.g., relationships, beliefs, pressures, past experiences). | • Train internal facilitators to keep people focused on problem solving (not blame) and open dialogue.  
• Institute regular communication meetings around work issues—make safety part of agenda. |
| 4) Seek a common understanding | • The goal is to arrive at a common sense of the problem and possible solutions. Through common understanding we engender trust and open communication and, thus, gather support. It is important to develop strategies that reach every level and subculture in the organization. Who do you need to | • Relational coordination survey.  
• Gather political support.  
• Commitment mapping.  
• Create boundary |
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| win over or neutralize? Who is vital versus nice to have? Identify silos and communication breakdowns, and create structures to bridge the gaps. Do you need new roles, new teams or task forces? | spanners.  
• Coordinators.  
5) Perpetual assessment  
• This is a state of constant awareness and evaluation. Describe and measure the ways of thinking that people must adopt to correct deficiencies as they appear. Continuously gather and review data with relevant stakeholders. Determine the meaning of data and correct actions.  
• Design custom perception survey with stakeholder representatives.  
• Use interactive technology.  
6) Integration  
• Newly understood data reveals former misunderstandings and false ideas. Taking correct action is more likely now that the problem is seen more clearly. Not everyone sees the new reality at the same time. Part of the reframing is realizing that progress may be slow and that small interactions can have big consequences, and preparing mentally for setbacks.  
• Scenario planning.  
7) Vigilance  
• Changes occur in stages or layers and, by necessity, each completion is a new beginning. This is a time for vigilance to monitor the measurements previously set up, and prepare to change course if necessary. This is not a time to relax. Neither visible progress nor apparent failure should be taken for granted. All of the above processes continue to ensure that corrective action will have the intended results.  
• Milestones.  
• Actions.  
• Due dates.  
• Core group meetings.  
• Social network monitoring. |

**Rosa Antonia Carrillo**, president of Carrillo & Associates Consulting, is a thought leader in transformational leadership for SH&E. She brings 20 years’ industry experience with all levels of the organization and from many countries including Asia, the Middle East and the Americas. As a frequent author, her understanding of safety culture and complex environments is translated into direct and concrete recommendations and tools to manage environmental protection and safety performance.