

## Conducting An Organizational Culture Workshop

5 The focal point of this communications package is the PowerPoint presentation; however, some organizations may wish to reinforce the Columbia message through an exercise or workshop intended to draw parallels between the Columbia learnings and the state of the local or corporate organizational safety culture. This guidance sheet suggests some approaches that you, as the presenter, may wish to consider.

10 **Determine the Scope of the Exercise/Workshop.** It will first be necessary for you to determine the format and scope of the exercise or workshop. Do you intend a short exercise to follow the presentation in order to “drive home” some of the points that are more germane to your organization? Or, are you planning an extended workshop (perhaps half a day in length) to allow you to process the material in detail? How many people will be attending? A facilitated workshop for a large group may require additional facilitators. If so, you will need to familiarize these facilitators with the content of the presentation, and the supporting background materials, so that they can be effective in their roles.

20 **Using the Self-Evaluation Tool.** This tool was created to address the needs of a workshop. One approach would be to distribute copies of the tool to the audience, and give them a few minutes to read it. The content closely parallels the PowerPoint presentation, so the tool should not take a long time to review, and will help refresh the memory of what was just heard in the presentation.

25 The “Questions for Self-Examination” are the focus of the tool. After the audience has had the chance to review the tool, you should guide them through the consideration of the questions. You may not be able to consider all of the questions in a short workshop or exercise. Based upon your familiarity with the status and needs of your organizational culture, you may wish to emphasize particular questions. As the caveat at the end of the tool points out, some of the proposed questions may not be pertinent to your needs, and you may want to create other questions that more appropriately address your particular context.

30 If you have a large group in attendance, you may want to break up into smaller groups, perhaps assigning one or two of the topics and question sets to each group. The work groups would then report out their conclusions to the assembled group prior to the conclusion of the workshop.

40 Another approach might be to distribute the self-evaluation tool at the conclusion of the presentation. Briefly review the tool, explaining its purpose, and then request attendees to spend some time on their own reflecting on the questions sets. In a subsequent meeting, the group can reassemble and discuss their observations and concerns (establish a firm schedule for the follow-up meeting before the conclusion of the first meeting). It is important that there be some time for group discussion to allow sharing of perspectives.

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50 If it is your intention to move on to a problem solving phase for this process, you may wish to schedule this for another meeting to allow participants some period of time to reflect on the identified concerns. Motivated participants may wish to seek additional input from others not in attendance, or may simply want to observe the organization a bit more to firm up their perspectives on where the problems are and what needs to be done to address them. Regardless of the approach used, this phase is important. There is little value in identifying the problems without moving forward to address them.

55 **Using Other Case Studies.** The presentation is very explicit in identifying the specific organizational culture deficiencies associated with the Columbia incident, and defining the 6 basic organizational culture themes associated with these deficiencies. While the presentation similarly identifies organizational culture deficiencies that contributed to the Piper Alpha incident, it stops with the assertion that each of the identified deficiencies  
60 can be mapped to one or more of the 6 cultural themes. This was done intentionally to leave the mapping as “a pleasant mental exercise for the student.” This could be used as the basis for a short facilitated group exercise. A similar approach has been taken to the Flixborough case history.

65 Similarly, the PowerPoint presentation allows you to include a company or site-specific case study. If you develop such a case study, your intent should be to analyze the event to identify the organizational culture issues that contributed to the event. Ideally, these should be mapped against the 6 cultural themes in order to show the relevance of the Columbia incident learnings to your organization (and to leave the memory that really  
70 bad things can happen). You may choose to identify and map the issues yourself, including the results in the presentation. Alternatively, you could only present the chronology and consequences of the event, and leave the identification of the cultural issues and their mapping to the 6 cultural themes as facilitated group exercises. If time is limited, consider identifying the cultural issues yourself and including them in the  
75 presentation and only do the mapping as a group exercise.

While the Columbia, Challenger, Piper Alpha and Flixborough background documents are included in this package primarily for your reference, you may wish to distribute them for use in any group exercises.

80 **The Rest of the Story...** This communications package focuses primarily on the common organizational safety culture issues that led up to three catastrophic events: Challenger, Columbia, Piper Alpha and Flixborough. The 6 organizational culture themes that have been described do not cover all of the cultural pathologies that could  
85 exist within an organization. Refer to the white paper “Safety Culture: What’s At Stake” that is also included in this package. This white paper describes the full complement of attributes that CCPS is suggesting should be found in a sound safety culture. You should consider concluding any exercise or workshop with the message that you have been focusing on just part – an important part, but not all – of the safety culture issue.

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