

GroundEffects™

Reporting Maintenance and Groundcrew Error Reduction Efforts

Editors Note: *The following is an article written by Gisele Richardson of Richardson Management Associates, Ltd. This article is the continuation of Human Factors Climate After Reorganisation Part I which was printed in the last edition Summer, 2001. If you missed the last edition, please e-mail MARSS - marss@marss.org.*

Human Factors Climate After Reorganisation Part II

- Gisele Richardson

WHO'S PROCEDURES?

"Whose procedures?" Gives decision-makers a good opportunity to check their arrogance quotient: don't presume that you know better than the people who have to carry out the procedures and systems that are instituted. Set up task forces to work out which procedures and systems that are instituted. Set up task forces to work out which procedures and systems will prevail. Their objectives should be to come up with something better than existed in either company before. If the planning is well done, the emerging system will be superior to the better of the two original ones. Make sure your task forces are well facilitated so that everybody is heard and the decision is not taking place in a one-up/one-down atmosphere again. Make use of outside facilitators who do not belong to either faction. A "mine is better than yours" attitude is not conducive to creative exploration. With regard to operational efficiency, *bear in mind that if you impose a bad system you are inviting malicious compliance and its consequences.* Task forces should be told, "Here are the guidelines – you come up with the best solutions".

An example of good thinking:

A merger of five companies, all using 737's. The chief pilots closeted themselves with the five sets of procedures, noted and adopted those

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We Are All Part Of A Team

- Richard Komarniski
of Grey Owl Aviation Consultants

Change is one of the hardest things for humans to cope with, but for our industry to survive, we all must continue to change.

Curse the word change - many of us hate change, refuse to change, dislike the challenge, don't want to get out of our personal comfort zone. How many times have you heard "This is the way we've always done it, why change?" The aviation industry is going through many changes: new equipment; new styles of aircraft; and new methodologies to aircraft maintenance. We need to be willing to view change as an opportunity. The days of the one-man band around the aircraft are becoming extinct.

Teamwork in our industry is very important for aircraft to be maintained and operated properly.

We can see by the illustration that it does not matter where we are in an organization; there are many people responsible to ensure the aircraft

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GroundEffects™ would like to
extend our thanks to the
following companies for their
generous contributions.



AIR CANADA

(Con't from page 1, Human Factors...)

Help us to prevent accidents before they happen!



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which are congruent, and worked through the others to come up with the best system, and to standardize. In cases of strong disagreement, they went back to the manufacturer. The focus was on coming up with the best possible standard operating procedure. Ownership issues – competition – were acknowledged and worked through. There was a high level of satisfaction at the outcome.

An example of sloppy planning:

Because both airlines used the same equipment, no urgency was sensed to review standard operating procedures. By scheduling mixed crews before standardization, every take-off brought overt or covert disagreement: "Flaps before gear!" "Gear before flaps!" And unproductive discussions about lift in either case.

I was once invited to the flight deck early on in the merger and witnessed an extended and ridiculous discussion about what is the appropriate time to close the door – with each pilot clinging to the truths in HIS tribe's prayer book!

In another case, following three quick acquisitions, pilots were faced, for several months, with FOURTEEN different configurations in the switchery on the same type of aircraft.

Another example of poor standardization process:

Cabin crews end up flying in three different types of aircraft following a merger. A policy is announced requiring standard equipment, and standard equipment location, on all aircraft. It is not enforced. In some cases, even the same type of aircraft has different equipment and their locations vary. A safety audit reveals that the cabin crew sometimes did not know the location of some of the equipment.

Of course, there IS a need for prompt attention to standardization and the removal of ambiguity or confusion in the system. Too often, however, these "solutions" are power-based decisions, delivered from on high, when far more workable answers could come from the people on the front line. Quite apart from the fact that the people most closely involved are most likely to come up with a better solution than senior

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management, there is obvious gain in releasing the creativity of staff, creating a climate of genuine partnership between staff and management, and between staff of the two founding members and, perhaps most important, ensuring staff ownership in the solutions they will have to implement.

Remember that sometimes the losers were the better airline – the airline with the better standards. Identify the better processes before pushing for standardization. In aviation, the Hurry Up for standardization sometimes precludes thinking through the various options.

Witness, for instance, another example of doing it right. It refers to the need to rationalize flight crews, with career consequences even for the survivors, some of whose promotions; pay and pensions will be affected:

“Some people are faced with the fact they will likely never attain Captaincy.

- Gisele Richardson

One company thought through clear criteria for the desired outcome in the staffing of the flight deck: numbers required in each position, strict equity, final tab for remuneration, and so on, then supported the union of the affected staff to come up with a solution that best meets the needs of the company AND protects the interests of the staff. There was a good acceptance of the outcome.

Here is an example of how not to do it:

Pilots in each company were represented by a different union, with one group significantly larger and more powerful than the other. In the absence of clear guidelines provided by the company to protect the needs of the smaller company, the larger union crushed the smaller group, with the latter suffering the majority of demotions and dismissals. The surviving pilots grudgingly exchanged seniority for security. The bad feelings that festered as an outcome of the company abdication of their responsibility to set guidelines about acceptable solutions became a safety problem, serious enough to come to the attention of the civil aviation authorities who requested a review of the situation.

It is almost inevitable that there will be severe personal pain for many employees. Some pilots are faced with the fact they will likely never attain captaincy; some fly with a more junior captain after having been down-graded to First Officer; some captains are demoted; others retain their salary but are at a standstill; some may never have another raise before retirement. These are real personal tragedies. And similar experiences may apply to the whole of the staff, not just to the flight crews. Some individuals will take it in stride; others will experience a painful and visible loss of self-esteem; others will appear to take it in stride but will, in fact, be seriously troubled. This is especially true for the person who finds it difficult to express feelings, to ask for support, and who generally would

define himself as “weak” were he to do so.

It is legitimate to expect the company to provide some emotional support during this transition. The support should be institutionalized, and not depend on the individual requesting help. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, sometimes the person most in need is the one least likely to be “able” to reach out.

Bear in mind, too, that when an unjust outcome takes place, the emotional consequences are not just the losers’: it’s a Pyrrhic victory even for the winners, at least for the more sensitive among them who can easily put themselves in the shoes of the losers with whom they are flying, and who experience some guilt and remorse until they, too, begin to question the trustworthiness of management. So, in the end, everybody loses.

Remember, too, that under the best of circumstances, men and women who bitched before will bitch after. Employees who were problems before the merger will be problem employees after. Their negative impact on the rest of the group may be more noxious because of the underlying anxiety in the system. Dealing with them is a personnel issue. The measure of success is that the majority of the affected employees’ (1) understand the reasons for the decisions, and (2) believe that they were made fairly.

**UNITY THROUGH A
COMMON ENEMY OR
“Sometimes We Do The Right
Things For the Wrong
Reasons”**

As long as The Enemy is the other

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(Con't from page 3, Human Factors...)

donor company, change will be hard to come by. A common enemy makes a big difference. As a safety officer concerned with unity, your contribution might be to help define a new threat to both groups!

An organization composed of four donor companies finds cohesiveness in their life-and-death struggle against a larger, more established competitor. "Agreeing to salary reductions to keep the airline afloat brought us together", said a pilot. "It was warm feelings for all; we all own a bit of it now."

Two companies merge, and three years later they are taken over by a third company. The initial merger is badly handled, and results in a long-lasting chasm between the two employee groups, even – or perhaps especially – where they were integrated into functional work teams. "But," says one of the employees, "we're on the same side now." "How did that happen?" asks an innocent bystander. "Oh, now we all hate company C which took us over just last year!"

ARE YOU FEELING REALLY IMPORTANT?

Even in situations of change where the human aspects are well managed, the members of both groups, some more than others, will experience grieving. Men generally being so ill equipped to recognize and legitimize feelings, this is a "display" they too often choose to ignore. All change brings about loss. Even positive change. The newly-wed is excited and happy about his new life; nevertheless he is losing some freedom, he is losing the opportunity to explore all those other attractive ladies, he is losing some connection

with his male friends, he is losing the familiarity and habits of his bachelor life. These feelings are real. Likewise, even in a positive merger situation where there is excitement and hope for the future and perhaps relief from anxiety, there is a loss.

Loss entails feelings. The greater the loss, the more overwhelming the feelings. There is a recognized process of grieving which is pretty universal; people can be helped through this process, and yet aviation companies seldom make use of it. A forum is needed to encourage the expression and sharing of these feelings, and to work them through. For some people, individual counseling might be indicated; for the majority, group meetings can easily be – but rarely are – set up.

Latin Americans are much more attuned to this aspect of management than North Americans and Europeans. Our clients there taught us the need for an intervention that was not on our list of offerings: the departing President asked us to work with his people to help them shift their loyalty to his replacement to ensure the continuing success of the company. It is the rare manager who understands the emotional impact of transitions.

THE JOKER IN THE PACK

And then, there is the union.

Each donor company's relations with their union is part of the package they bring to the new family, part of their culture. And this is a factor that has predictive value.

Clearly, the unions have to be brought on board. The unions have to be consulted on every matter. The process is long and complicated and generally imperfect.

One company genuinely determined to meld – in their case – FOUR collective agreements. They set up committees to resolve outstanding issues and grievances; they debated which clause would be taken from which of the collective agreements, and put out letters of intent which are amended as new information was available. And yet, they say, ruefully, they were unable to foresee all possible issues. A perfectly plausible clause on hiring practices taken from one agreement, for instance, was later found to conflict with perfectly plausible clause on lay-offs and recall taken another agreement. "There is", they say, "simply not enough time to foresee or discuss all possible issues". Trust raises its head again. What is the level of trust? If there is no trust, every small difficulty becomes a major obstacle. If there is no trust, the guiding rule will be, "Don't give an inch' take no prisoners".

If there is trust, there will be good will and some measure of flexibility on both sides to come to an agreement. Expect there to be a flurry of increased grievances; people will still tend to interpret the agreement according to their old book, based on historical precedent. If these do not taper off in the course of the first year, some genuine frustrations are not being heard.

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THERE IS NO QUICK-FIX HERE. It has to be worked out over time. Once again, trust will be the oil that eases the machinery.

A last word on the Big Company/Small unions I mentioned earlier. You will remember that the frustrations and conflict among the pilots is such that the CAA attempted to intervene. "However", says a FAX I received a few days ago, implemented to the letter, even though the employment situation, society's living conditions and the industry outlook has changed since the agreement was signed. The 'swallower' airline, even though they have tried to alleviate the impact of the agreement by all types of support to the unfortunate pilots, are unable/unwilling to take on a fight with the unions. Consequently, they have taken the stand that any pilot failing the flightdeck resource management concept on the grounds of being unable to accept the required flightdeck authority gradient, shall be removed from flight duty."

The CAA is painfully aware that this is an explosive situation with potential safety consequences, yet feels impotent to intervene.

A respectful suggestion, Captain Granaas: that a seminar might be organized for the regulators from each country to discuss the need to stipulate a broader range of their responsibilities in the event of a merger. Its purpose might be to clarify the need and means for more intense and careful monitoring of the emotional climate in a newly-merged company, and to develop ways to intervene with authority in situations of conflict in the realization that psychological issues, too, are part of their responsibility in ensuring safety. It seems that the willingness is there but the teeth are weak.

(If the Authorities can declare an aircraft not airworthy and ground it, why can they not declare a group of pilots' unfit-to-fly and ground them? The very existence of such a threat might "wonderfully crystallize the mind" of the two disputing parties).

FOR MANAGEMENT

In short, then, some of the prerequisites for a successful merger of people: allocate as much importance and time to the human infrastructure for this to be done well, and in a timely way – that is, before and at the very beginning of joint operations.

Allocate sufficient internal and external resources to develop workable way to deal with feelings and to allow resistance to emerge early and deal with them; make sure you wind up with teams with the same values and objectives. Conduct a Temperature-Taking to identify how people feel about the merger before and at regular intervals after, and identify subject areas or groups of people where there is a need to clear up some of the negative energy.

If you want cooperative behaviour, provide training in interpersonal skills and conflict resolution.

- Gisele Richardson

Management must clarify its objectives, its philosophy, its vision of the organization, and communicate, communicate, communicate. Employees need to feel that they are heard and that ideas are needed from all about what needs to be done. Minor (or major) frustrations must be identified and dealt with promptly. Provide the necessary skills: contrary to popular belief, teamwork is not a genetic inheritance. If you want cooperative behavior, provide training in interpersonal skills and conflict resolution. Invest in building cohesive teams.

So, action management can take to smooth the road:

- Clarify culture, values and their effect on the merger.
- Have a clear vision of the new organization and communicate it clearly and repeatedly and consistently to the employees.
- Ensure that senior and other management teams have dealt with their differences and are ready to work together.
- Avoid top-down decisions, consult with the operational groups.
- Admit your mistakes and re-open and remedy issues that were inappropriately handled.
- Announce changes in systems and procedures and staffing only when the criteria have been thoroughly considered, and communicate the criteria as well as the decisions.
- Critical success factors must be

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(Con't from page 5, Human Factors...)

identified and communicated to the employees and used as a motivational tool.

- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Walk-the-talk: if you proclaim safety-mindedness, don't cut budgets dangerously; if you proclaim fairness, don't demonstrate cronyism.
- Tell the truth.

Management too often assumes they have to present the employee with a cake that is already mixed, baked and iced. Management has a fear to be seen as not knowing what they're doing but, in fact, much of the time, they don't know what they're doing and could use some help from the staff in getting themselves clear.

It is a source of constant amazement to me that companies willing to pay enormous legal fees will balk at the minor investment of money for climate surveys, conflict resolution, and team-building that would put the company on the right track.

REMEDIAL WORK

This, of course, is the tough part.

If management has been insensitive to these issues in the past, the chances are the level of discomfort will be quite high now before they wake up.

Here are some symptoms of incomplete digestion of a merger that cry out for attention:

- Lots of gossip (we're working for a GOLD medal now!)
- Cliques: employees from company A only have lunch together and vice-versa
- Frequent references to "the company of origin",
- Criticism of existing rules without attempts to correct them,
- Unwillingness to accept existing rules even when they have been adequately explored and substantiated,
- Continuing animosity towards "the other",
- Malicious obedience,
- Lack of initiative and involvement,
- Low energy
- Inadequate relationships between management and staff,
- Lack of cooperation between interfaces,
- No joy in the workplace (this is good diagnostic indicator), depression, conflicts,

In an unfinished merger, the pastime of "Ain't It Awful" is alive and well: instead of tending to business, employees spend their time and energy saying Ain't It Awful about why the merger won't work, and Ain't It Awful about the latest outrage that THEY have perpetrated on US.

I repeat that the use of outside – objective – assistance is a must. Do Temperature-Taking: interviews – alone or in groups – of the key employees,

or of the troubled employees, of senior management, and establish a diagnosis. Which of the frustrations and discomforts are inherent in the process and which are susceptible to reduction? Not all problems are tractable. There WILL be some employees fired; there WILL be unfamiliar rules and routines. Nor are all problems related to the merger.

**In an unfinished merger,
the pastime of "Ain't It
Awful" is alive and well.**

- Gisele Richardson

If management is willing to consider these issues, problems which lie in inadequate systems and procedures can be dealt with readily enough. Management has to be willing to re-open "closed" discussions and to review earlier decisions.

Most important, in my view, the feelings, beliefs, attitudes that have developed are the key to change' these cannot be dealt with by lectures from management. Assistance HAS to be provided for the healing process. And the prerequisite is a genuine desire by management to examine itself, and to make the necessary changes, not only in systems and procedures, but in their own attitudes and to offer genuine support for the process of getting back on track.

WHAT CAN SAFETY OFFICERS DO?

Perhaps you are sighing and thinking that I am speaking to the wrong audience. You are right. The person

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who can most influence these aspects of the merger is the CEO. Still, the safety officer is not helpless or impotent. There are some actions you can take:

- Make yourself heard; voice your needs and concerns BEFORE the merger takes place so that they can be taken into account in the planning.
- Learn from others' experience; some of the common pitfalls are well known
- Keep your ear to the ground, and make sure you are aware of rumblings of discontent and discomfort and of their potential impact on safety.
- Pay attention to frustrations and bring them to management's attention.
- Make friends with your Human Resources department – they may be one of your best allies, and together you can devise a winning strategy to reinforce the human side of the business.
- Identify senior managers who are most open to these discussions and who have clout, and cultivate them. Create a "positive Mafia" in the company. Remember, you need all the help you can get.
- Work with your Training Department to ensure that the training program for the merger year (or two) gives priority to much more intensive human element training which focuses on helping people explore their feelings about the merger, and enables them to transcend any real loss the new situation represents for them, and to understand and adopt a team perspective based on collaboration, support and trust.
- Don't forget Maintenance, too often the Cinderella in most flight operations.
- In case of severe concern – or even less severe – call for a safety audit which has a strong psychological component, and make sure it is conducted by a person or a group competent to deal with the human aspects and credible to senior management.

DOING IT RIGHT

Doing it right takes commitment, time and money. But like accident prevention, it is cheaper than the alternative.

Each case will be similar to every other in some ways and will also be unique in some important ways. There are no cut-and-dried recipes. By definition, the human process is messy! But we can learn from others' experience, we can benefit from objective assistance, we can do it better than last time!



Gisele Richardson -
President and founder of
Richardson Management
Associates Ltd, Montreal
Quebec.

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operates properly and safely. As professionals, we must be aware that it only takes one person (owner, manager, supervisor, or employee) coming to work with a personal agenda other than to work together to start the chain of events that can lead to an incident.

Have you ever worked with someone who comes to work everyday motivated to make life miserable for others? Their goal is to play mind games with peers and management. I cannot believe that with the responsibilities we have as technicians that there are still people in our midst who come to work with such attitudes. A well-worn quotation still rings true: "If you are not part of the solution, then you are part of the problem."

I have worked within both positive and negative environments during my career. In the positive environment, teamwork was everyone's goal and vision. In the negative one, there was very little teamwork. Looking back at the cultures of the organizations, I recall that the positive place was a very busy operation with no time for idle hands. It had a very professional group of people who were not afraid of putting in a day's work. In the negative environment, employees were very competent people, but they were not busy and enjoyed "stirring the pot" and making life difficult for others.

If you ever have the opportunity to work in an organization where teamwork was part of the culture, you will find that the aircraft are operated efficiently and profitably. Everyone benefits. There is nothing like the feeling of satisfaction that

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Teamwork does not just happen by mistake.

- Richard Komarniski

one gets when “everyone” (maintenance, cargo handlers, fuelers, pilots, flight attendants, dispatch, agents, supervisors and management) carries their load in order to dispatch an aircraft. There usually is no trace of “them versus us” when teamwork is present.

Teamwork does not just happen by

mistake. A lot of constructive communication needs to take place by all departments involved in order to facilitate teamwork. Where there is trust and good communication among all employees; teamwork develops. Additionally, morale increases and the error rate decreases. I wonder why? With almost any kind of team, its success, its very existence, depends upon the way in which all play together. Good teamwork fosters high quality relationships and the effective team leader needs to be very much a part of the team.

Characteristics of a good team include having the right balance of skills, abilities and aspirations with people who can and do express themselves honestly and openly. Mistakes are faced openly and used as vehicles for learning.

Good relationships exist with other teams and departments. Each values and respects the other and meetings are productive and stimulating, with everyone participating and feeling responsible for the results of the decisions made.

Finally, communication as a whole is effective - up, down, across the organization, and with the outside world.

If the organization possesses these characteristics, then “work” is a happy place to be. We all have a choice: to play to win as a team or to lose individually.

The 33 Greatest Lies in Aviation..

1. I'm from the FAA and I'm here to help you.

2. Me? I've never busted minimum's.

3. We will be on time, maybe even early.

4. Pardon me, ma'am, I seem to have lost my jet keys.

5. I have no interest in flying for the airlines.

6. I fixed it right the first time, it must have failed for other reasons.

7. All that turbulence spoiled my landing.

8. I'm a member of the mile high club.

9. I only need glasses for reading.

10. I broke out right at minimum's.

11. The weather is gonna be alright; it's clearing to VFR.

12. Don't worry about the weight and balance — it'll fly.

13. If we get a little lower I think we'll see the lights.

14. I'm 22, got 6000 hours, a four year degree and 3000 hours in a Lear.

15. We shipped the part yesterday.

16. I'd love to have a woman co-pilot.

17. All you have to do is follow the book.

18. This plane outperforms the book by 20 percent.

19. We in aviation are overpaid, underworked and well respected.

20. Oh sure, no problem, I've got over 2000 hours in that aircraft.

21. I have 5000 hours total time, 3200 are actual instrument.

22. No need to look that up, I've got it all memorised.

23. Sure I can fly it — it has wings, doesn't it?

24. We'll be home by lunchtime.

25. Your plane will be ready by 2 o'clock.

26. I'm always glad to see the FAA.

27. We fly every day — we don't need recurrent training.

28. It just came out of annual — how could anything be wrong?

29. I thought YOU took care of that.

30. I've got the field in sight.

31. I've got the traffic in sight.

32. Of course I know where we are.

33. I'm SURE the gear was down.

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Now What?

- Richard Komarniski
of Grey Owl Aviation Consultants

For the past year and a half, I have written about the human factors that affect our judgment, commonly referred to as the "Dirty Dozen". These human factors are alive and well in our work environment, impacting our professional judgment every day. As an industry, what have we learned in the last five years since we have initiated and moved forward with human factors awareness training?

In October 1998, leaders in the industry gathered with the National Transportation Safety Board to discuss the current state of human factors training - what we have accomplished and where do we go forward in the future with human factors training? The main discussion was about how to keep motivated and not to lose sight of this mission in our growing industry.

With turnover in our industry, including retirement of senior technicians, a lot of new, young blood is being introduced to the industry. This presents a recurring challenge to ensure that the valuable lessons of the past are not forgotten and relived as new errors or major incidents. The safety nets we have built over the past years must be reaffirmed and passed down.

During the October conference, most aviation companies who did not have a program appeared to come to the realization that some form of human factors training is needed to reduce maintenance error in their organization. Since most of the errors in maintenance that occur are human errors, it is becoming more apparent that training both management and technicians on how to avoid making human errors is a worthwhile effort.

In general, human factors training can lead to improved quality, a safer environment, and a more involved and responsible work force. More specifically, the reduction of even minor errors can provide measurable benefits including cost reductions, fewer missed deadlines, reduction in work related injuries, reduction of warranty claims and reduction in more significant events which can be traced back to maintenance error.

"Management needs to understand the potential benefits of human factors training."

- Richard Komarniski

During the conference there were many questions and comments. A few thoughts on what is required for a successful human factors program, based on comments by those attending the meeting include:

- Management needs to understand the potential benefits of human factors training

- Management needs to allocate resources to plan, develop and implement a training program
- Employees need to see the support for the program from their supervisors (more than just lip service)
- Human Factors training provides a common language and understanding of what causes errors and how to prevent them
- Measurement of errors, through the creation of a data base is essential in order to identify trends for recurrent training requirements, to correct latent failures, and also a means to monitor progress
- Companies must be willing to change culture and procedures when required, otherwise employees will feel frustrated
- Companies have to develop a mission statement and a long term plan and goal for training support
- Define what everyone's role is to support the mission statement. What is in it for management and what is in it for employees?

Given the facts that 80 to 85 percent of aviation incidents are directly attributed to human error, an alarming trend has been identified. Per NTSB findings, maintenance is playing a major role in at least 50 percent of major aviation incidents recently as compared to a 25 percent role just a few years ago. What is causing the 100 percent increase? The maintenance community cannot take these figures lightly.

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Today, more than ever, with the stress, pressures and demands for performance of individuals, the Maintenance Department has to be recognized for its professional level of work. We must be given the tools to work with, especially in regard to the Human Factors. The Regulations, give us the regulatory structure to comply with, and the Labour Code/OSHA providing workplace safety rules.

Maintenance personnel need Human Factors training and the insight it provides to help us understand our own work habits and those of our co-workers. We have to avoid the blame game and get down to the root causes. Human Factors Training will change a blame culture to a learning culture.

Implementing a human factors training program involves changing attitudes and behavior in employees, attributes which are difficult to change in individuals. But, with a little perseverance, as more people complete the program, they begin to speak a common language. Soon, behavioral change starts to be evident within the organization - changes that will provide long-term and lasting benefits. But, few companies are willing to open themselves up to such a culture change incorporating an open reporting culture and improved communications - many companies believe that they are "safe enough".

The results of providing human factors awareness training have been demonstrated in our industry. These programs have been strongly endorsed by the FAA, Transport Canada, the NTSB, the CAA, PAMA, NBAA, and many other government agencies and aviation organizations. However, many companies are still reluctant to make the commitment. They have a lot of reasons for not implementing human factors awareness programs. They want to continue to study the issue and approaches and talk about what should or should not be included in human factors training in their airline or repair facility. Isn't it time for less talk and more action?



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AVIATION HUMOUR

HERMAN™

by Jim Unger



"We've lost your suitcase, but you get first choice of any bag off the next arrival from Europe."



From the Editor!

Welcome to the twenty-second edition of GroundEffects.

This edition of GE has the long awaited conclusion of Human Factors Climate After Reorganisation by Gisele Richardson of Richardson Management Associates, Ltd. In the conclusion Gisele again points out all the different aspects of a company merger that affects the employees. After reading this article, I seem to think that having companies merge together into one holds many tremendous tasks that most people would never think of... It appears that many people often under estimate the confusion and inner dynamics that merging two different groups of people together can create.

We also have two wonderful articles from Richard Komarniski of Grey Owl Aviation Consultants (www.greyowl.com). Richard's first article entitled We Are All Part of A Team deals with change and how difficult it can be for humans to cope with this. No one likes change. As humans we like our own personal comfort zone, we like routine, we like to know ahead of time what is going on and we have little patience. Everyone has started new employment at one time or another... Can you remember the feeling in the pit of your stomach as you walked into your new place of employment? Can you remember feeling a little anxiety? This feeling is not a feeling that any of us enjoy. When two companies merge, the same feeling likely will be present... The feeling of walking into the unknown. It can be a very scary time for employees. As Richard points out - teamwork in our industry is very important for aircraft to be maintained and operated properly. Teamwork is essential in our industry. We must learn to except change and not resist it... We must learn to communicate constructively with others. If we can accomplish this than we can make work a 'happier' place to be.

Richard's second article, Now What? Refers to what is happening now... It refers to what is happening in Human Factors training and how hard it is for some companies to accept human factors training into their company. Richard points out the 80 - 85% of aviation incidents are directly attributed to human error. This is alarming trend that is making many aviation companies sit up and start to take notice to Human Factors Training. To lighten the edition up a little, I have added a little humor with the 33 Greatest Lies in Aviation and a cartoon. It seems that it is time to start thinking about Fall and Winter... Hard to believe that our summer is almost over and the bad weather is starting to take over. This means that we need to be extra careful with many things. Be happy and think safe!

Renée Seabrook

!! Help !!

Yes, we need your help.

As you know, we publish a quarterly newsletter, 'Ground-Effects'. Our editor has been having trouble finding suitable articles for inclusion, so, you send us an article, and we will give you a year's 'GroundEffects' free, delivered to your door.

Editor's judgment is final!!

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