

EFFECTIVE DEBRIEFING SKILLS & TECHNIQUES

Purpose of a Debriefing in CRM Training is to:

- Be a crew-centred learning exercise following a practical exercise
- Promote learning through self-appraisal
- Analyse and evaluate own/team performance in depth
- Identify and interpret where things went well/not so well
- Determine remedial action (strategies and countermeasures)
- Let the crew do most of the talking !!

Objectives of a Crew-Centred Debriefing, the crew:

- Discuss issues identified directly with each other
- Analyse and evaluate themselves what happened in the exercise in terms of CRM skills and techniques
- Determine how they can best use the lessons learned back on the line to enhance safety and efficiency

Role & Responsibility of Facilitator:

- Clarify dual role as both Instructor and Facilitator
- Adopt a non-judgemental approach
- Encourage active participation amongst crew at all times
- Encourage crew to analyse and evaluate their performance in depth
- Act as a resource for CRM issues and techniques etc.
- Ensure Training Objectives are met

Role & Responsibility of Crew:

- Identify and discuss CRM issues directly with each other
- Critically analyse their performance in the Exercise in terms of CRM skills and techniques
- Evaluate how things turned out and why
- Determine what they would continue to do/do differently in future, and how this might be achieved

STRUCTURE OF DEBRIEFING A PRACTICAL EXERCISE

INTRODUCTION

The Facilitator to:

- Review the rationale of a Debriefing and C-A-L Model Structure
- Establish the Training Objectives to be achieved
- Identify key Learning Points/Outcomes (*)
- Set expectations for crew-participation
- Assist the crew to develop an agenda to structure the discussion based on issues identified
- Confirm length of session

(*) *Be realistic when setting learning points to be covered as the crew may be tired, upset, unreceptive etc. after the practical exercise – consider a maximum of 3-4.*

C-A-L MODEL: KEY DEBRIEFING STRUCTURE

Overview:

- **C = CRM:** suggests strategies for helping crew to focus on CRM skills and techniques that played a role in the practical exercise
- **A = A&E:** shows how to guide crews to **ANALYSE** and **EVALUATE** aspects of their performance that went well/not so well
- **L = LINE:** provides a structure for assisting the crew to explore how they can apply lessons learned from their own analysis and evaluation to line operations

CRM: Applying the Company Standards

Crew to:

- Focus on CRM skills and techniques
- Use Company Framework (eg. NOTECH/Behavioural Markers etc.)
- Use CRM-specific questions in their discussion

Facilitator to:

- Direct crew to specific CRM topics to help them focus on and explore the issues identified
- Reinforce the use of effective CRM skills and techniques throughout session
- Act as a resource for all CRM issues and techniques, etc.

A&E: Analysis and Evaluation of Performance

Crew to:

- Critically Analyse and Evaluate their performance in the practical exercise
- Identify WHAT went well/not so well in terms of CRM skills and techniques, and WHY
- Address each other directly and not through the Facilitator
- Discuss HOW they were affected by each other's actions during the exercise, and WHY

Performance went WELL:

Facilitator to encourage:

- Deeper analysis and evaluation as to WHY this was the case
- Crew to identify and explore WHAT strategies proved to be effective, and WHY
- Crew to identify their key strengths that supported good performance, and WHY
- Crew to discuss HOW they might have handled the situations identified if they had not gone so well, and WHY
- Remember that just giving praise is not effective analysis of performance

Performance went NOT SO WELL:

Facilitator to encourage:

- Deeper analysis and evaluation as to WHY this was the case
- Crew identify key problems, and WHY this might have been the case
- Crew to determine and explore HOW & WHY these problems occurred
- Crew to identify own limitations in terms of CRM skills and techniques that impacted on performance, and WHY
- Crew to determine HOW to resolve or avoid similar problems in future, and WHY

LINE: Applying Lessons Learned

Crew to discuss:

- WHAT strategies proved to be effective, and WHY
- HOW to apply the lessons learned to line operations
- WHAT they would do differently on the line based on their experiences in this exercise, and WHY
- WHAT factors might have a negative influence on the strategies and lessons learned from this debriefing exercise back on the line, and WHY
- WHAT actions (in terms of CRM skills and techniques) they might take to counter any negative influence in this regard, and HOW might they achieve this

SUMMARY

- Briefly summarise the Debriefing
- Reiterate important issues identified
- Identify Key Learning Points/Outcomes
- Link session to line operations
- Check understanding
- Ensure Training Objectives achieved
- Reinforce positive aspects of crew behaviour
- End on a Positive Note !!

FACILITATING THE DEBRIEFING DISCUSSION

Top Tips to adopt:

- Guide the session to the extent necessary to achieve the Training objectives and Learning outcomes
- All critical CRM topics/issues are identified and covered
- Integrate instructional points as needed into the crew's discussion
- Use probing questions to promote in-depth crew participation
- Balance your dual role as instructor and facilitator
- Ensure that all crew members are fully drawn into the discussion
- Direct questions to the quieter crew members
- Re-word questions rather than giving the answer
- Actively listen and use silence/pauses
- Reinforce positive aspects of the crew's behaviour

Traps to avoid:

- Thinking facilitation is just a discussion
- Focusing the debriefing on your own perceptions of what happened in the exercise
- Forgetting the debriefing rationale and structure
- Imposing your own rigid agenda
- Providing you own analysis or evaluation before the crew have completed theirs
- Lecturing and jumping into the "Tell" mode (*but if the crew's knowledge seems sparse, you need to instruct to refresh that knowledge*)
- Interrupting crew discussion
- No conclusions reached
- Not checking crew understanding
- Short-changing high performing crews by cutting the session short

QUICK POINTS OF REFERENCE

The Facilitator to:

- Remember the session is crew-centred and not instructor-centred
- Guide the Structure with clear objectives
- Manage the Discussion
- Adopt an appropriate level of facilitation – you cannot facilitate if they do not have the knowledge/experience
- Avoid the Traps
- Ensure Training Objectives achieved and Lessons learned

A FINAL THOUGHT:

It might be a good idea to ask ourselves:

“Is the crew’s poor performance in terms of CRM skills and techniques due to something that WE as instructors/facilitators are doing wrong?”

For example, inappropriate training style, unrealistic expectations, forgetting to teach the ‘HOW’ rather than just the ‘WHAT’ etc. etc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

“Facilitating LOS Debriefings: A Training Manual” – L.K. McDonnell, K.K. Jobe, and R.K. Dismukes