

2010 Military Health System Conference

A Commander's Perspective: Leadership to Improve Quality and Patient Safety

Sharing Knowledge: Achieving Breakthrough Performance

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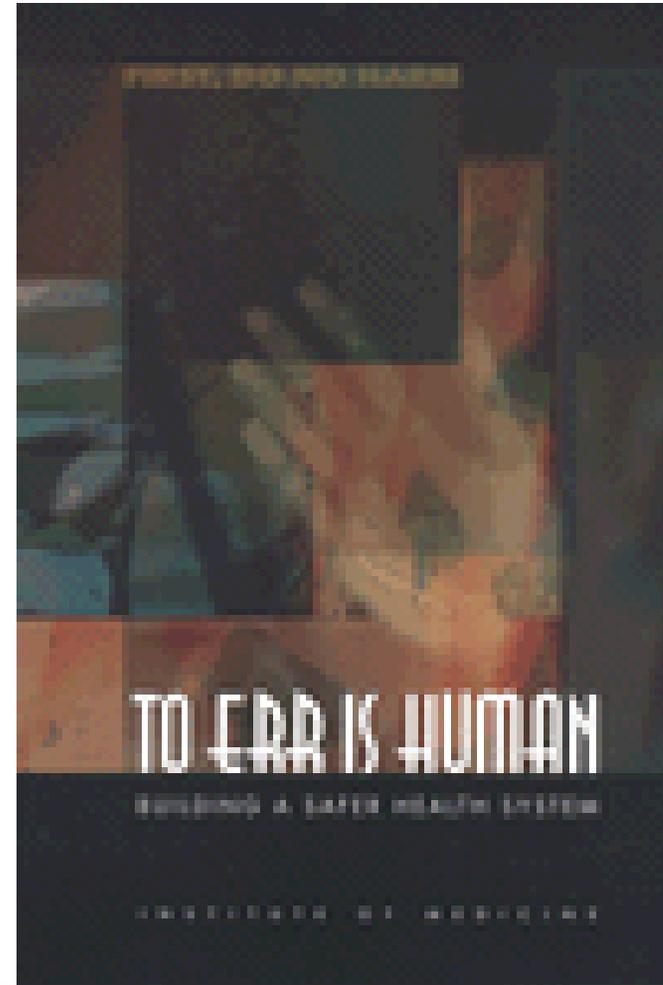
27 January 2010



The Challenge



- 1999 IOM Report:
- “...tens of thousands of Americans die each year from errors in their care and hundreds of thousands suffer or barely escape from non-fatal injuries”



Progress at 10 Years?



- “There is little evidence to suggest that the number of people dying from medical harm has dropped since the IOM first warned about these deadly mistakes a decade ago”
 - Lisa McGiffert, Director of Consumers Union’s Safe Patient Project (www.SafePatientProject.org).

The Goal



- Prevent iatrogenic patient harm
- Transform the MTF into a High Reliability Organization (HRO)
 - On par with:
 - Navy Nuclear Power
 - Carrier Flight Deck Operations

Safety Essentials



- Effective communication
- An environment of “psychological safety”
- Rapid feedback & output metrics
- Accountability
- Teamwork

*Team*STEPS

Team Competency Outcomes

Knowledge

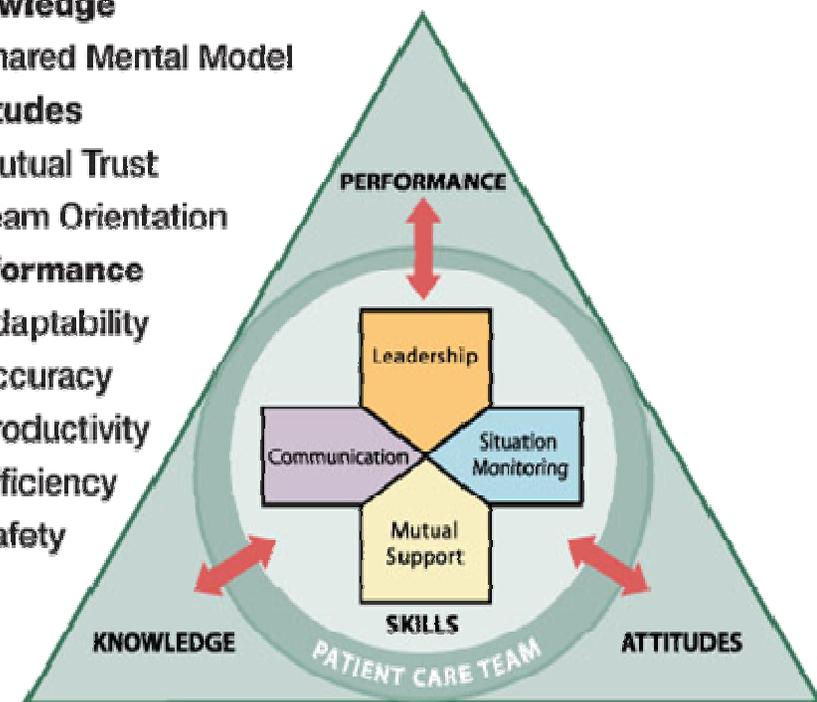
- Shared Mental Model

Attitudes

- Mutual Trust
- Team Orientation

Performance

- Adaptability
- Accuracy
- Productivity
- Efficiency
- Safety



Common Thread?



- Actively engaged leadership
 - “Inadequate leadership is a contributing factor in 50% of sentinel events”
 - Joint Commission, 2006



Leader's Role



- Establishes the strategic vision
- Focuses effort within the organization
 - “What interests my boss fascinates me”
 - Sets benchmarks for desired outcomes
 - Directs resources
 - Allocates and focuses intellectual capital

Leader's Role



- Sets the tone for the culture
 - “Culture eats strategy for lunch every day”
 - How the leader reacts to serious safety events is critical
 - Leader directs the spotlight
 - Individual blame vs. objective system review based on a “just culture”

The HRO



- HROs share these characteristics:
 - Preoccupation with failure and its causes
 - Reluctance to simplify interpretations
 - Sensitivity to operations
 - Commitment to resilience
 - Deference to expertise

[Weick and Sutcliffe, 2001:
Managing the Unexpected](#)

Leader's Role

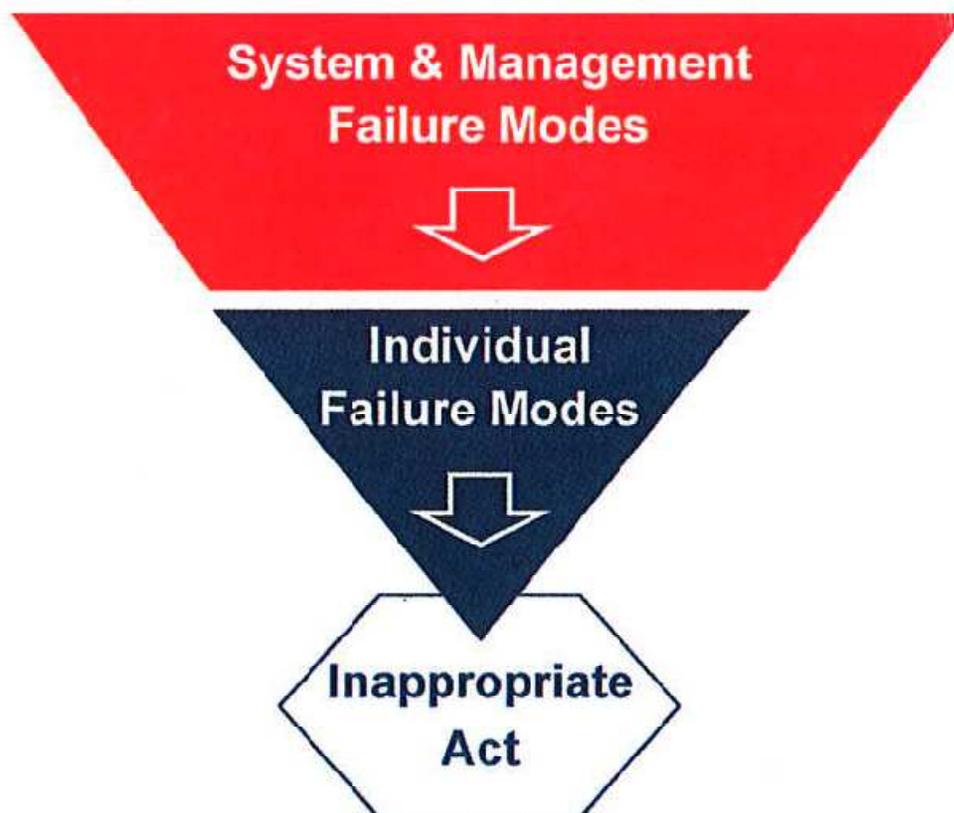


- Fosters “mindfulness”
 - Not a Zen concept but a constant awareness of small amplitude events during normal operations that can portend larger dangers
- Encourages anticipation and engagement
 - Especially during mundane, repetitive activities
 - Safety becomes a dynamic “non-event”

Leader's Role



- Champions the Imagination
 - Challenges team to:
 - Extrapolate from small discrepancies
 - Create novel scenarios and develop contingencies to resolve them
 - Broaden range of possible failure modes

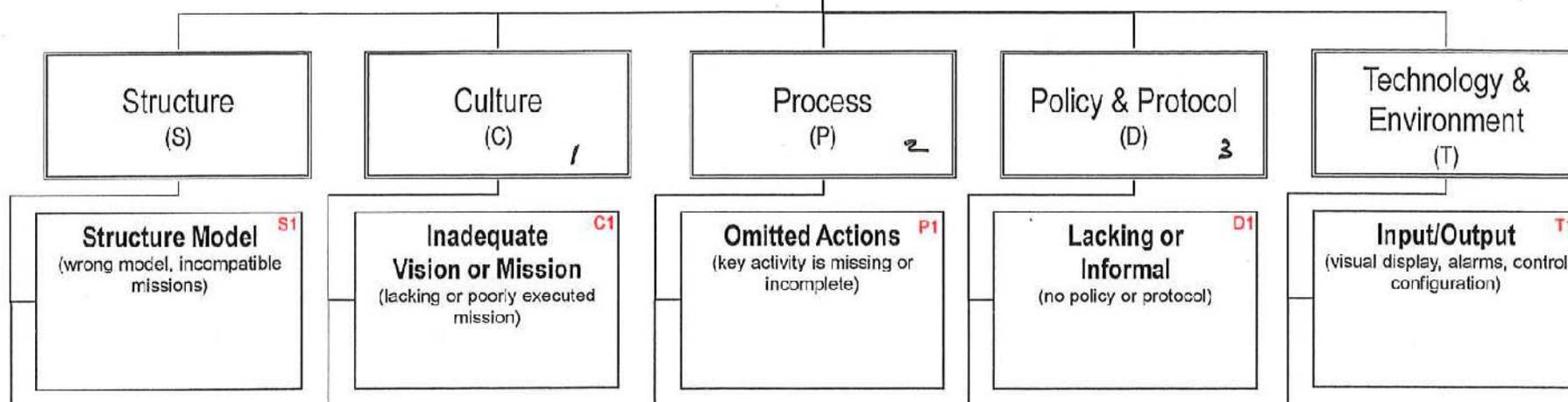


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Taxonomy of System Failure Modes

(26)



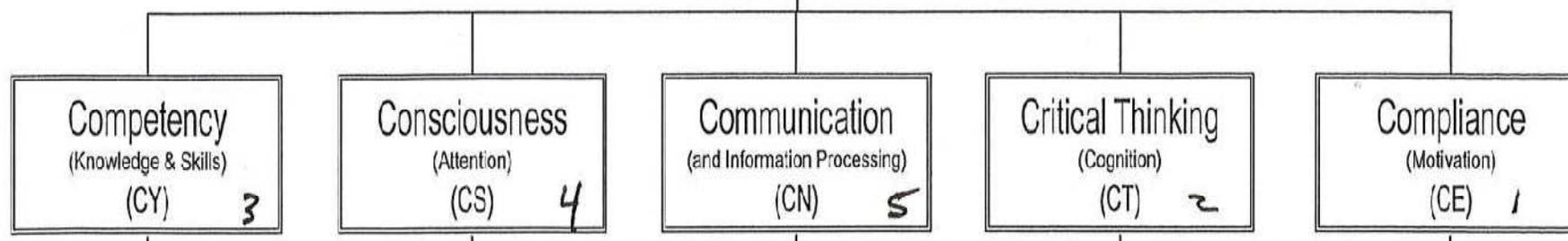
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Taxonomy of Individual Failure Modes

(20)



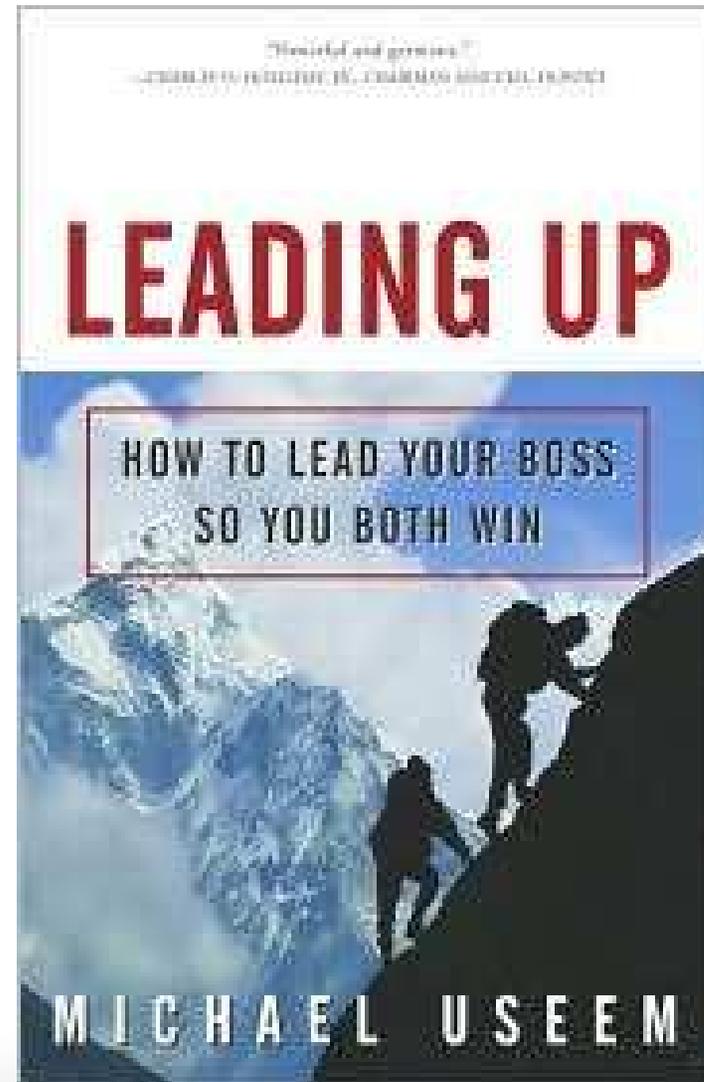
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Leadership Engagement



- “How do I get my hospital Commander to drink the patient safety Kool-Aid?”
- The secret to leadership engagement is to engage your leader.



The Myth



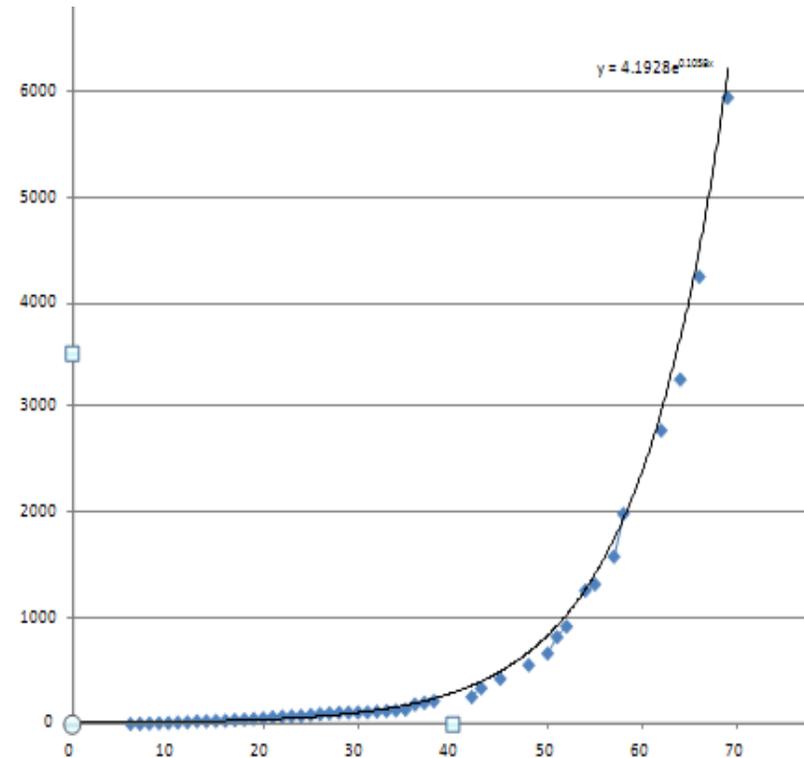
- There is no secret handbook for Commanders
- YOU are the subject matter expert



Leading Up



- Leaders appreciate good news
- Get your foot in the door with positive results
- Offer **solutions**
- One page point papers get read



Appreciative Inquiry



- A change in emphasis from problem solving to **capacity building** by identifying and doing more of the “right thing”
- Focus on Successes

Sue Hammond: The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry, 1998.

Appreciative Inquiry

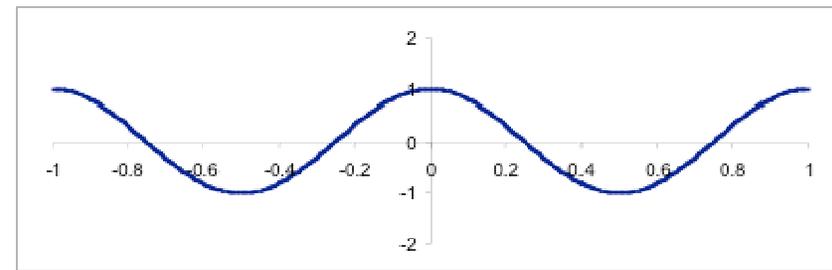


- SOAR not SWOT
 - Strengths → What are we doing well?
 - Opportunities → How can we do more of it?
 - Aspirations → What does perfect look like?
 - Results → How we know we've gotten there
- Emphasize successes *not* vulnerabilities

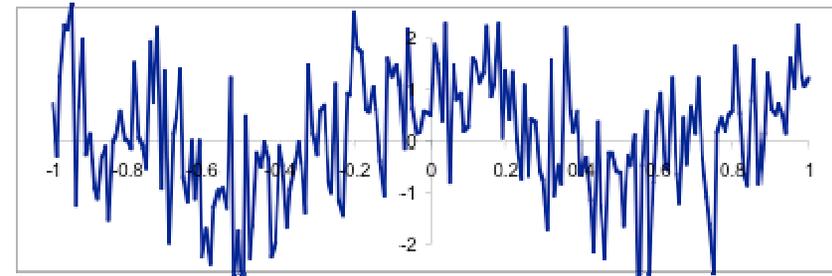
Provide Clarity



- Increase the signal to noise ratio:
 - “Of all the requirements out there **we** need to focus on these”



(a)



(b)

Suggested Tactics



- Invite your Commander to visit high performing areas to kickstart “Safety Walk Rounds”
 - Provide a script of important patient safety questions and answers for discussion
- Integrate quality goals into strategic plan
 - Quality measures should be on an equal footing with business plan and readiness data
- Consider forming a Quality Council
 - Provides central visibility and oversight

Tactics



- Is your Commander a clinician?
- Great opportunity to model ideal behavior
- WHO Checklist in OR at NH Jacksonville
 - Team Introduction:
 - “I’m Dr. Gillingham and I’m a good surgeon but I’m fallible. I need your help to take great care of this patient”

Tactics



- Introduce your Commander to DoD Patient Safety Program Resources:
 - <https://www.qmo.amedd.army.mil/ptsafety/pts.html>
 - TeamSTEPPS®
- Sign him up for the DoD Patient Safety Commander's Forum
- Email: donald.robinson@tma.osd.mil

DoD Patient Safety Commander's Forum



Purpose

To promote, secure, and sustain the **support** of MTF Commanders in **creating and leading** a safety culture in MTFs and across the MHS

Goals

- Promote executive learning, collaboration, and networking for leading culture change
- Establish a core group of MTF leaders to influence safer cultures & safer outcomes
- Leverage MHS executive migration to reinforce and sustain patient safety culture

Next Steps

1. Recruit Forum members (establish a network)
2. Establish needs and priorities (resources, training, evidence-based solutions)
3. Create sharing venue (events, activities)



“Leadership is the critical element in any successful patient safety program and it is non-delegable.” -IHI Leadership Guide to Patient Safety, Innovations Series, 2006

When All Else Fails...



- Key reminders:
 - Responsibility to Line Commanders
 - Leadership chapter in the JC manual
 - Quality and safety are **less** expensive
 - Opportunity to avoid negative press
 - Personal Stakes
 - Aviation Corollary

Summary



- Engaged leadership is a critical success factor in the prevention of patient harm
- HRO principles translate well to medicine
- Appreciate and build upon current successes
- “Lead up” for patient safety success



Discussion