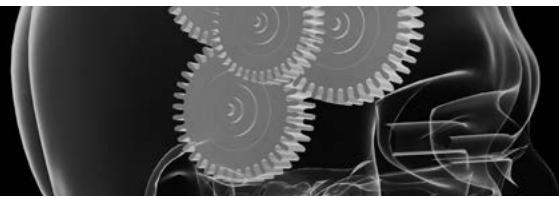


HUMAN FACTORS

How to take the next steps



CASE STUDY 11 - Find a way to do it - by hook or by crook...

What happened?

Whilst replacing lifting "runway" beams, the willingness of a rigging crew to get the job done endangered their own lives.

A beam was being removed from the module roof by the rigging crew. A supervisor was inspecting the site and noticed that the chain blocks being used to lower the beam had been attached to the beam by using a technique known as "back-hooking" (i.e. wrapped around the beam and hooked back on itself). This was a technique prohibited on the site because there had been incidents when the hook had twisted and released the load. Operations were not being carried out according to the lifting plan for the job.

Work was stopped immediately and the load made safe. The supervisor highlighted that back-hooking was unacceptable practice and the work-party agreed. However, in their opinion, there was no other way to do the job. When they looked again at the job there were safer ways of completing the lift and these were written into a new lifting plan.

Had the hook released, one of the rigging crew could have been killed.



What human factors were involved?

What did people do intentionally?

The work party decided to use a technique which was prohibited

When challenged, they realised that the technique was not safe, but believed it was the only way of getting the job done.

What did people do without meaning to?

Unintended behaviours were not the main cause of this situation.

Barriers



- Risk Assessment
- Procedures



- Supervision
- Managing Human Failures

What can we learn from this incident?

- We love to find a way to do the job we're given. Sometimes we will accept greater risk to achieve the goal.
- We often have to solve problems in our job. However, when we're about to do the job with the materials available to us, we often make unwise compromises - compromises we wouldn't make when we are planning the job.
- When we think about risks as a group, we can end up taking bigger risks than we would as an individual. This is called "groupthink". We reassure each other and give each other confidence to do something that we wouldn't do alone.
- When planning a job, assess the practical problems you will encounter and how you will deal with them. Test whether this is something that you would take responsibility for if you were doing it alone.