

Communications

From the my studies of Management of Organisational Change I adopt a communications and management philosophy that “People Support What They Create”

While with B.H.P. I worked with Professor T.J. Larkin of Harvard University analysing safety communications in the company. There were 3 main messages to come out of this research-

Use face-to-face communications,

Use the supervisor to communicate and

Frame messages relevant to the immediate work area.

With written communications I aim to be succinct, have an appropriate structure and utilise management summaries with major reports. I use photographs, diagrams, flow-charts etc. to illustrate main points. Important written communications must always be followed up by a face-to-face meeting. The BHP guideline for general correspondence is that if it takes more than 2 pages to write it is too much for busy people to write and read. The world of safety is famous for well-meaning, ponderous, glossy publications that no one really knows about, cares about or uses. Safety communications are also famous for the use of “weasel-words”. “Weasel-words” promise a lot but deliver little.

Action and Experiential learning models must be used for communicating learning as opposed to lecture style presentations.

Professor T.J. Larkin says “If it is not face-to-face it is not communication”.

Always follow-up important e-mail communications with a conversation, preferably face-to-face. E-mails are very subject to mis-interpretation