

SERVICE BRIEF:

User Centered Work Team Design Assessment

The Situation:

The organizational structure of the Operating department can have a tremendous impact on the effectiveness and profitability of a production facility. The existing operations organization in many sites is the result of years of evolution, where incremental change has been implemented in response to changes in the plant or in business conditions. A company rarely goes out of its way to develop a specific culture, it happens because of events, experiences and policies, often leading to a situation where the owner has not consciously established a desired culture at the facility, yet is disappointed with the culture that has developed.

It is not unusual for this structure to be manipulated frequently by managers seeking to improve performance, but who have limited experience in what makes a truly effective organization. This can lead to operating personnel with inadequate training, little understanding of their roles in the organization, poor understanding of goals and objectives, and a high level frustration within the organization that results in sub-optimal overall performance.

The Solution:

User Centered Design Services has developed an assessment methodology that compares the current operations Work Team Design to industry Best Practice. Our review includes the Work Group Structure, the Work Group Interaction, and the Management Structure and Philosophy. Our process can be applied to current staffing at a site to indicate areas for improvement, as well as study potential staffing reductions to create a smaller team structure while retaining or enhancing overall performance.

METHOD:

Our analysis examines all aspects of the work team including the following:

- Work Group Structure
 - Size – Number of Field Operators, Console Operators, and Supervisors
 - Type and Level of Supervision
 - Proximity
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Continuous Learning Environment
- Work Group Interaction
 - Decision Making Style
 - Task Interdependence
 - Shared Goals and Objectives
 - Cooperation vs. Competition
- Management Structure and Philosophy
 - Informed Decision Making
 - Root Cause Analysis
 - Safety Stressed over Production
 - Environment of Continuous Learning
 - Cross Team Collaboration
 - Ownership of Goals and Targets
 - Compliance with Policies and Procedures
 - Clear Leadership Roles
 - Stated Values



- Clear Expectations
- Comprehensive Management of Change Policy
- Positive Reinforcement

The Process:

The typical process we use to perform a Work Team Design Assessment consists of a few preliminary conversations to determine the particulars of the study. We can apply this methodology to a single facility or all facilities throughout a Client's system.

The number of UCDS personnel and the duration of the visit will vary depending on the size of the facility and the scope of the study. Site visits typically range from one to two weeks and require two UCDS personnel. During the site visit UCDS will interview Senior Management, Operations Management, Operations Supervision, Engineering, and Operators. These interviews are typically an hour long. We prefer to interview Operators at their duty stations. This puts the operators more at ease, and minimizes scheduling issues and overtime costs for the Client. The Client should plan on a significant number of personnel being interviewed during the visit, and budget the internal cost appropriately.

After the site visit, UCDS will require a short period to analyze the data and generate a report. Our report will contain a full analysis of the Client's current practices and organization. We will compare these practices versus industry best practice and suggest modifications to improve overall performance. If desired, UCDS can return to the site to present our findings to Management.

Benefits:

The Work Team Design Assessment will help not just evolve a new organization and culture but also develop an organizational culture that will give the Client a competitive advantage and promote a positive safety culture. Organizations with a positive safety culture are characterized by communications founded on mutual trust, by shared perceptions of the importance of safety, and by confidence in the efficacy of preventative measures. In addition, a well designed organization can greatly improve overall job satisfaction and increase employee well-being.

Related Services:

User Centered Design Services also offers services to assist Clients who may be considering a realignment or consolidation of console or field operators. In addition, we can offer benchmarking services to compare overall site policies and procedures versus Best Practices. **Field Operator Staffing Assessment, Console Operator Staffing Assessment** and **Management System Gap Analysis** Briefs are available for additional information about these services.