

Facilitation Tip 10: Use the Pronoun, “We”

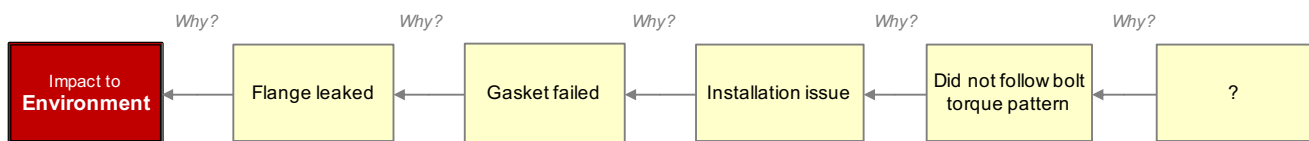
Using the pronoun “we” instead of “you” during an incident investigation helps alleviate the perception of blame on individuals involved in an investigation, similarly to Facilitation Tip #5. This shift will help make the person feel like a resource to the investigation rather than a target. When the facilitator uses the term “we,” it implies that everyone in the company has a level of responsibility for the incident, and subsequently, ownership for revealing the causes of the incident and identifying sustainable solutions. This also allows the management team to understand what may be hindering operating excellence, starting with themselves.

The benefits of using “we” include:

- Minimizing blame (and the perception of blame),
- Creating more effective discussions surrounding the details of the incident, not the people involved,
- Increasing opportunities for work process improvements, and
- Uniting the investigation team, who may be comprised of a variety of multidisciplinary employees or levels of an organization’s hierarchy.

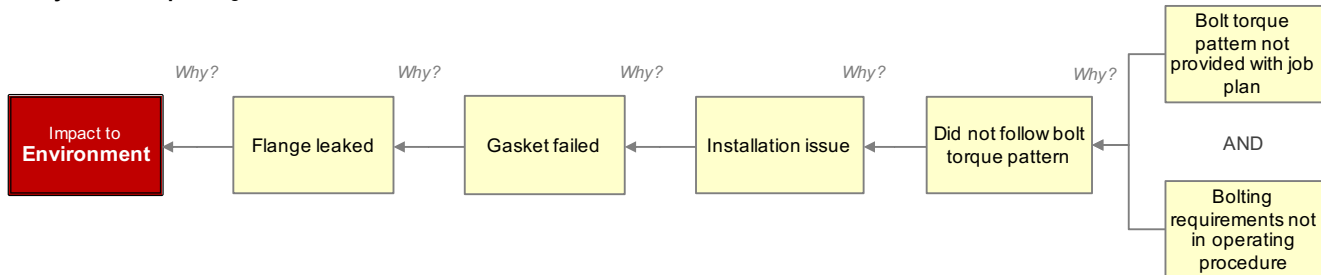
Flange Leak

4-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



After investigating this flange leak and talking to the technician who was in charge of the flange reassembly, we learn that a box wrench was used to hand tighten the flange, causing the torque to be insufficient. The next question is, “Why?” If we ask the technician, “Why did **you** torque the bolts in that pattern?” there may be a perception of blame. Asking, “Why did **we** torque the bolts in that pattern?” there is less of a perception of blame. In fact, it may highlight the systemic, organizational issues rather than just focusing on the person. This allows additional causes to be revealed and provides an opportunity to identify sustainable solutions.

6-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



LESSON: Using the pronoun “we” will likely alleviate some of the perceived blame on individuals involved in an incident and promote more open discussions. People will become more forthcoming with information--allowing for better insight into why decisions or actions were taken. This will allow the investigation findings to be more specific and provide an opportunity to identify systemic, sustainable solutions.

Learn how to find better solutions by diagramming the details within your problems. Hone your skills by attending a free webinar, an online short course or one of our full online Cause Mapping Root Cause Analysis workshops. Visit www.thinkreliability.com/events to see our upcoming training schedule.

Facilitation Tip 10

Watch this video for a more in-depth explanation of the benefits associated with using the pronoun “we” in your incident investigations.



(3 minutes)