

Facilitation Tip 5: Avoid Using Names During the Investigation

As soon as you put a person's name in a cause box or throw it out during discussion, there may be a perception of blame placed on that individual. It's already hard enough to get people to open up and share their knowledge during an investigation, especially when he or she made decisions that led to an incident. People make mistakes. Don't put any additional perceived pressure or blame on that person. Using names on the Cause Map™ diagram or within an investigation file keeps your investigation from remaining factual, objective and neutral. Avoid names of companies and contractors too.

Some managers are adamant that if employees aren't reprimanded or blamed for an incident, then there is no accountability. I agree that accountability is essential. So, as managers, we need to understand how we are accountable for the incident, as well and how we can better set up our employees for success. Move past blame and dig into the details of the Cause Map diagram to reveal which work process(es) broke down. Instead of focusing on reprimands, focus on the work processes of how employees are trained or qualified, what resources or tools they're provided and how we ensure our expectations are met (i.e. audits, observations). The Cause Map diagram will reveal these opportunities, but it requires moving the focus away from individuals.

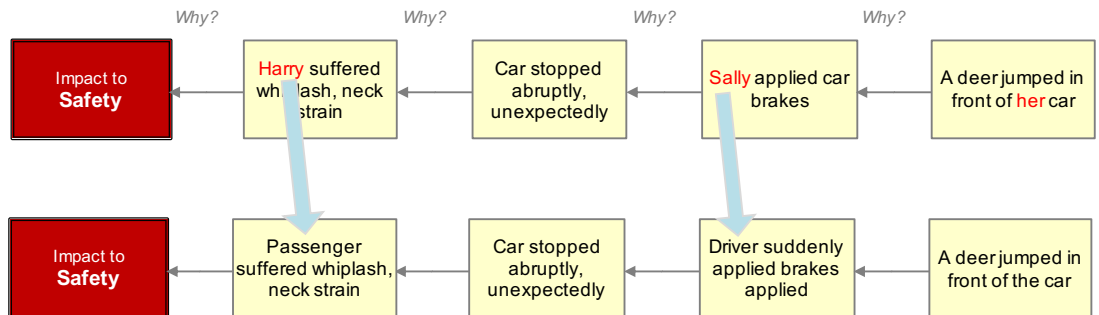
The benefits of removing names include:

- Minimize blame (and perception of blame),
- More effective discussions surrounding the details of the incident, not the people involved, and
- Increased opportunity for work process improvements.

4-Why Cause Map™ Diagrams

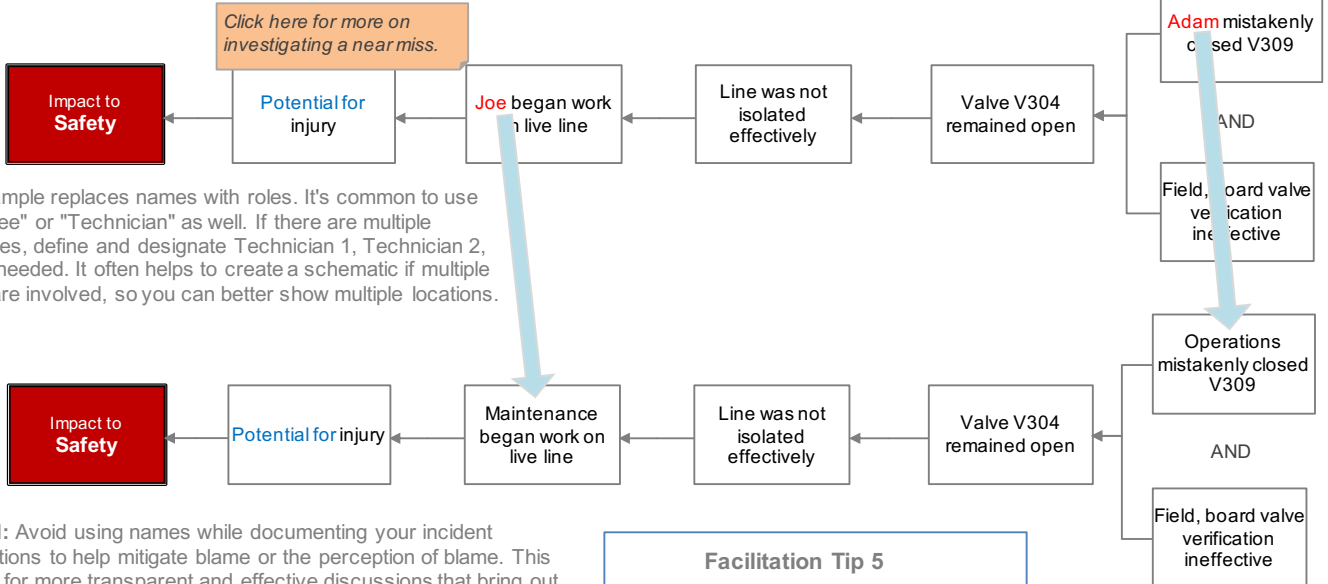
Whiplash in a Car Accident

If in his initial interview, Harry mentioned that Sally suddenly applied the brakes and you put that on the Map, Sally may see this and get defensive or caught off guard (like a deer in the headlights). Keeping the names out and indicating a role or a position will drive more effective engagement during your investigation.



Near Miss When Line Ineffectively Isolated

6-Why Cause Map™ Diagrams



This example replaces names with roles. It's common to use "Employee" or "Technician" as well. If there are multiple employees, define and designate Technician 1, Technician 2, etc., as needed. It often helps to create a schematic if multiple people are involved, so you can better show multiple locations.

LESSON: Avoid using names while documenting your incident investigations to help mitigate blame or the perception of blame. This will allow for more transparent and effective discussions that bring out the specifics within the incident, which ultimately, will reveal work process improvements.

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Facilitation Tip 5

Click here to see the video showing the additional benefits as well as suggestions to avoid using names during your investigations.



(5 minutes)