

# Going to the Gemba



Craig Thornton

# Presenter

- **Craig Thornton**
  - Started as a QC Inspector in 1987 at Reckitt and Colman
  - Quality, ISO and/or Compliance Manager at Kiwi Packaging, Skellerup, Wilder Transport, Tait Electronics, Allied Telesis
  - Certification Auditor for Verification NZ
    - 9001, 14001, 4801, wine standards, ACC WSMP, rail safety
  - Co-Owner of Mango.



# What is the Gemba?



“The real place”  
where the actual work gets done

“Go to the Gemba”



Go to the place  
to see the actual situation  
for understanding

“Go see, ask why,  
show respect”

Fujio Cho  
Honorary Toyota chairman







PHOTO: DAVID HATTINGLY/CNN





# 5 Things You Do at the Gemba

1. **Talk** to the people doing the actual work – then shut up and listen
2. **Look** at what is actually happening
3. **Ask** what is the purpose of the activity - people do get confused with the purpose
4. **Look** at each step in the process
5. **Ask** yourself the following questions:
  1. Are they engaged or not?
  2. Do they have ways to deal with problems?
  3. Are they trained to create a better process or not
  4. Would they make good process managers

# 5 Things You Don't Do at the Gemba

1. Never discipline staff
2. Talk too much and Don't give people opportunity to respond
3. Be disrespectful
4. Ask closed questions
5. Don't ever blame
  1. Don't ask who
  2. Only ask why

# What takes place at the Gemba?

1. **Get in touch with the current reality**
  1. Most leaders understanding doesn't match reality
  2. People think differently to you
  3. Helps you find gaps
  4. Better job at managing
  5. Better job of leading
2. **Develop critical thinking techniques**
  1. Teach and coach others in business to solve problems
  2. Don't solve the problems yourself

# What You Will Find

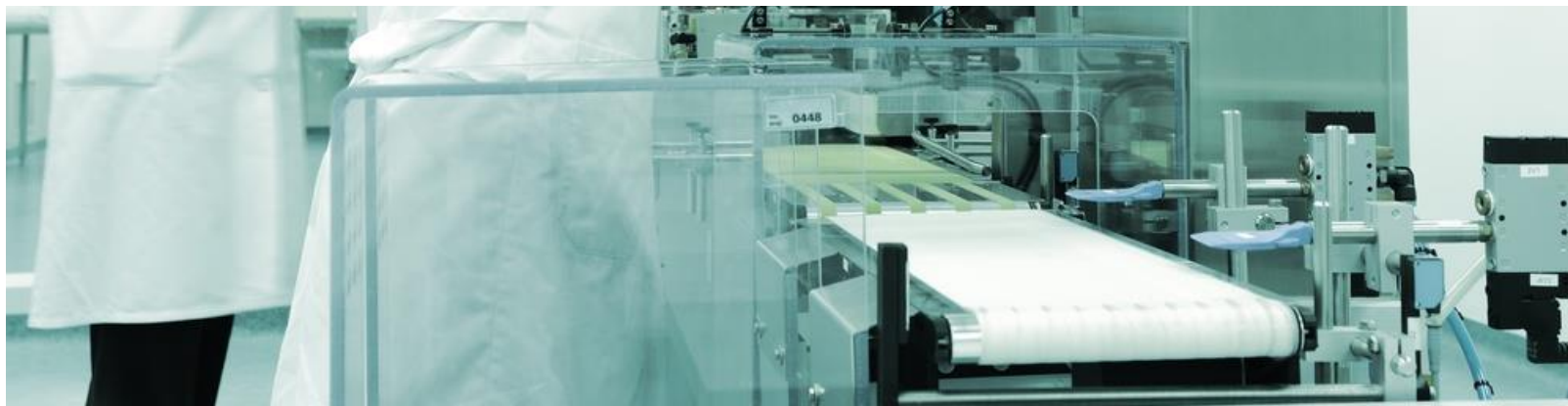
- **What you might find?**
  - No stability
  - Out of control
  - Confusion about purpose
  - Confusion about process
  - No effective ways of solving problems
  - No one reads the procedure.
- **Might see what is indicative of the whole organisation**
- **Every Manager should be able to do this, frequently -**
  - Frontline supervisor – suggest 3 walks a day
  - Middle management – daily visits but different locations
  - Top management – random times - MBWA

“... going to the Gemba should be the most important 30 minutes of a *Manager's* day.”

# The Problems in the Gemba



Lack of consultation and participation in management systems by employees



# The Problems in the Gemba



QHSE Professionals lack visibility  
- hiding behind keyboards





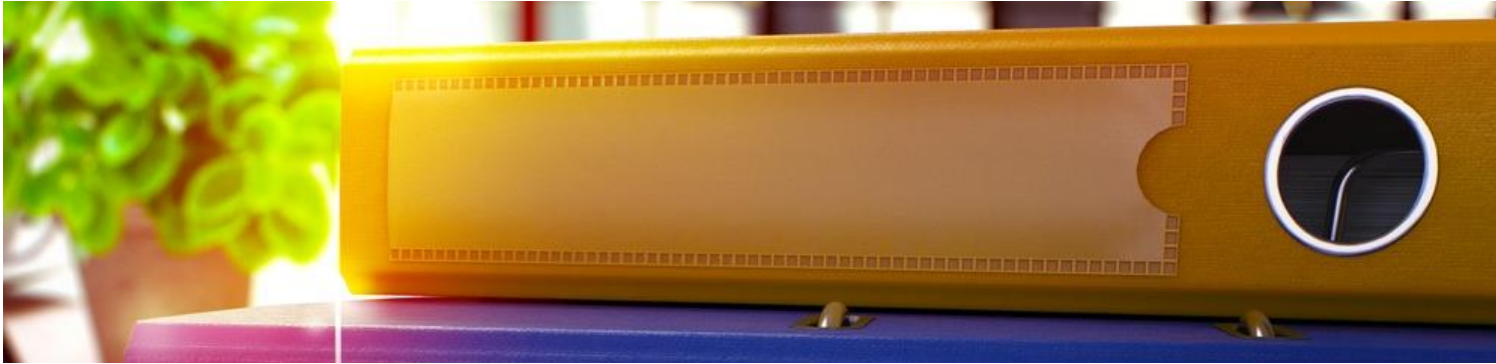
# The Problems in the Gemba



Creating documents  
is busy work



# The Problems in the Gemba



Too much reliance on documentation  
to manage controls



# The Problems in the Gemba



Too much reliance on  
templated document systems



# The Problems in the Gemba

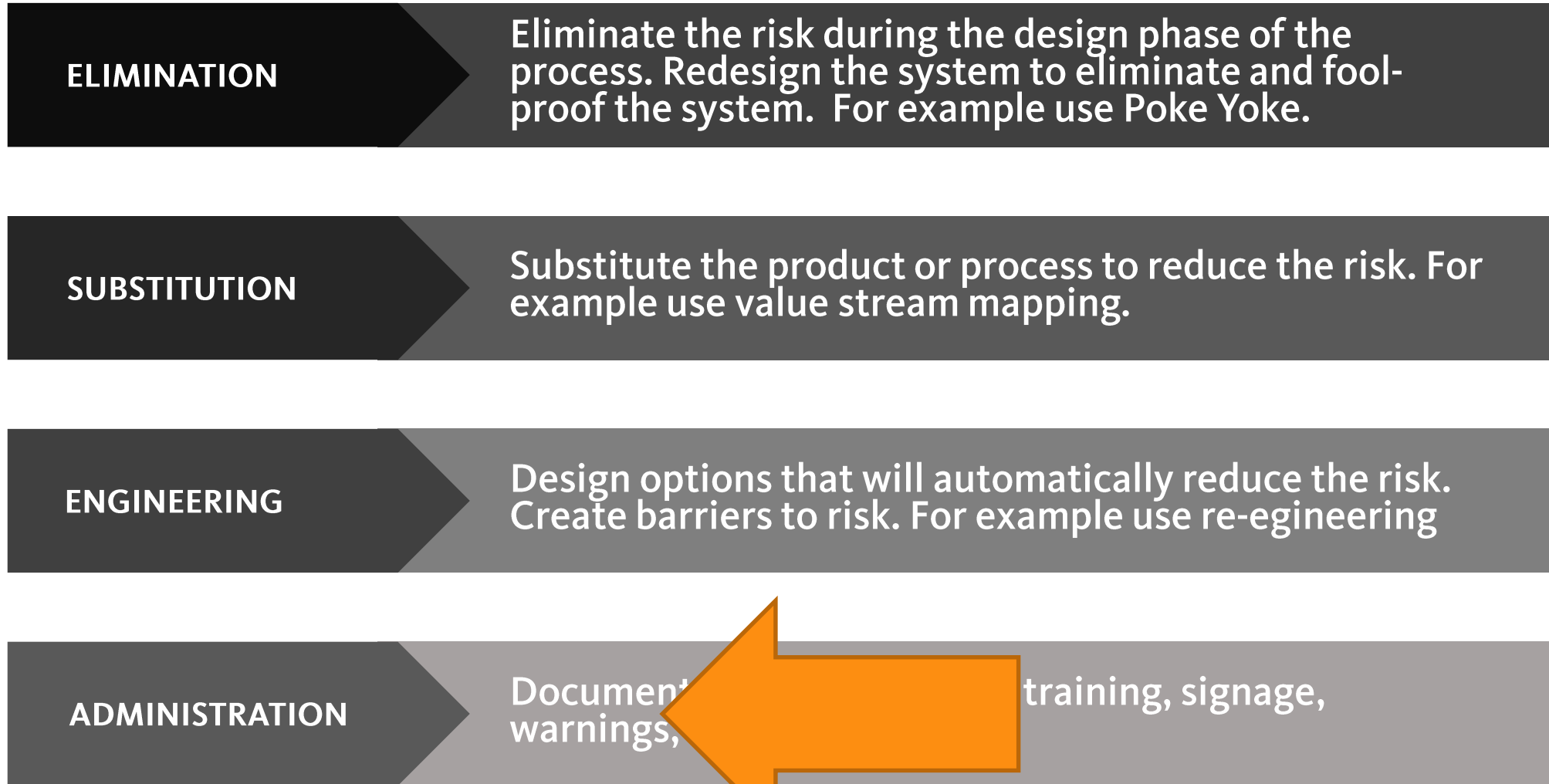


Too much focus on process and  
not on purpose

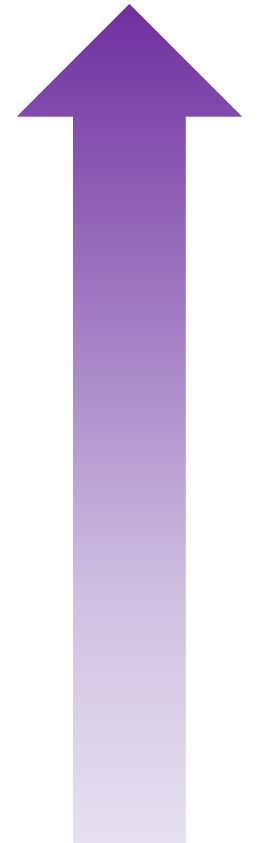


# My problem with documentation

# Low Level of Control of Risk



Most effective



Least effective

# The Problem with Documentation

- In general, when is documentation used?
  1. Induction
  2. When something goes wrong – or there is variation
  3. Internal audit
  4. External audit

# The Problem with Documentation

- Disengages employees and contractors
- Creates a bureaucracy
- Not an efficient or effective use of time – “time suck”
- Too wordy and not written for the audience
- Writing documents not related to risk
- External auditors love documents
- Created by Consultants to prove their value to the business



# Stop: writing documents



# Start: Going to the Gemba



# Q&A