JUST CULTURE

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Agenda

PART 1

• Types of Errors
• Common Responses to Errors
• What is Just Culture?
• Expected Human Behaviors
• Accountability and Types of Errors
• Where We Are At With Accountability
• Outcome Bias
What type of behavior is this? 

Human Error?

At-Risk Behavior?

Reckless Behavior?
What happens when…

… a bus driver runs a red light while sending a text message?

… a nurse administers a medication to the wrong patient?

… a physician places an order on the wrong patient?

… a technician fails to deactivate an electrical system prior to repairing a lighting fixture and starts a fire?
How do we respond?

Often people point the finger of blame....

Focus on individuals
The term “Just Culture” refers to a values-supportive system where organizations are accountable for the systems they have designed for supporting the safe choices of the staff.

Employees, in turn, are accountable for the quality of their choices – knowing that, as humans, we cannot be perfect, but we strive to make the best possible choices.
Why Just Culture?

We often hear of the need for a less punitive approach to errors and accidents so that those who manage and regulate within these industries can develop more open learning cultures.

WHY?

Experience shows that open reporting cultures are more effective at identifying the system improvements that lead to reduced organizational risk across many high-consequence industries.
The million dollar question…

How do we hold employees accountable for their choices WHILE encouraging an open learning culture?

… High-consequence industries continue to struggle with issues of accountability.
Question of justice…

Justice in the workplace is as complex as it is in society as a whole.

WHY?

Every human being faces overlapping duties and competing demands.

AND…

As humans, we are all destined to make mistakes.
Key questions in Just Culture

What happened?

What normally happens?

What does procedure require?

Why did it happen?

How was the organization managing the risk?
Behaviors we can expect

**Human Error**
- An inadvertent action
- Inadvertently doing other than what should have been done
- Slip, lapse, mistake

**At-Risk Behavior**
- A behavioral choice that increases risk where risk is not recognized or is mistakenly believed to be justified
- Driven by perception of consequences

**Reckless Behavior**
- A behavioral choice to consciously disregard a substantial and unjustifiable risk
Which of the three behavioral types is generally the most significant threat to safety and why?

At-Risk Behavior

**WHY?**

- All three behaviors can result in a bad outcome.
- However, at-risk behaviors are most prevalent and when they have an equal end result but occur far more often, they are the most significant threat to safety.
Accountability and Types of Errors

**Human Error**

Inadvertent action: slip, lapse, mistake

Manage through changes in:
* Processes
* Procedures
* Training
* Design
* Environment

**At-Risk Behavior**

A choice: Risk believed insignificant or justified

Manage through:
* Removing incentives for At-Risk Behaviors
* Creating incentives for healthy behaviors
* Increasing situational awareness

**Reckless Behavior**

Conscious disregard of substantial and unjustifiable risk

Manage through:
* Remedial action
* Punitive action
Where we’re at with accountability...

An experienced surgeon sees a new piece of equipment at a conference. Back at the facility, a sales representative persuades him to use the equipment for a procedure. He has never used the equipment before and accidentally punctures the patient’s bowel. The surgeon repairs the bowel and the patient recovers fully. The OR has a policy that says new equipment will be officially approved and training will be conducted prior to its use.

“It is not only what WE do, but also what WE do not do for which WE are accountable.”

~John Baptiste Molière
Where we’re at with accountability…

Severity Bias
When an organization allows the severity of an outcome/level of harm to drive its response to an event

Effects of the Outcome Bias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverse Outcome</th>
<th>No Bad Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We punish the discrete error</td>
<td>We allow the reckless employee to go unchecked</td>
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<tr>
<td>We punish the individual at-risk behavior</td>
<td>No harm, no foul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potentially over-react to singular events</td>
<td>Under-react to potentially fatal system design flaws</td>
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Always remember…

“To err is human, to cover up is unforgivable, and to fail to learn is inexcusable.”

Sir Liam Donaldson
References

Outcome Engenuity, LLC
The Just Culture Community
www.justculture.org
Questions & Answers