

Manage Moments of Truth to Improve Plant Performance

Tanya Mann and Lynne Viscio

MGStrategy: 1737 Chestnut Street #301, Philadelphia, PA. 19103, tanya@mgstrat.com, lynne@mgstrat.com

Leadership at a downgraded midwestern nuclear power plant knew their refueling outage had to succeed. This would require employees to consistently demonstrate the right behaviors even under perceived productivity pressure. To that end, leaders engaged employees around anticipated Moments of Truth with positive results.

I. INTRODUCTION

Leaders at a downgraded midwestern nuclear power plant knew their refueling outage had to succeed. While their workforce had improved across all metrics, leadership was concerned that the additional perceived pressure of the outage could derail human performance gains. They wondered if employees would be tempted to take shortcuts in Moments of Truth. Instead of complacently hoping for a good outcome, they used leader-led conversations to address this risk head-on prior to the outage. They engaged every plant employee around tailored, reality-based Moment-of-Truth scenarios—situations where employees might know the right behaviors but may be tempted to do something else. Knowing that leaders would “have their back” when they did the right thing, employees produced the most successful outage in plant history.

I.A. Moments of Truth (MOT) Structured Cascade Exercise

To increase the odds that employees would consistently demonstrate the right behaviors rather than take shortcuts when they encountered MOTs, plant leaders engaged a vendor to help prepare a structured exercise.

Researchers engaged the workforce. They conducted qualitative interviews with department leaders, front-line supervisors, and individual contributors to identify MOTs encountered in past outages. Next, they used the data to create customized leader and worker MOT scenarios for each department. They tagged each scenario with a desired trait from INPO 12-012 Traits of a Healthy Nuclear Safety Culture.

Prior to launching the MOT exercise, the CNO called a supervisors-and-above meeting, in which he explained the MOT concept and reinforced that he expected a “30-day outage *done the right way*.” He shared an example of when he was tempted to take a shortcut and his “lesson learned.” He clarified his expectation that all leaders take personal accountability for safety over production. Leaders were equipped with the materials necessary to lead tailored MOT discussions with their direct reports.

The next day, the CNO held a Moments of Truth conversation with his team, launching the cascade. Within four weeks, every employee met with his or her immediate leader and peers for a candid conversation about the MOTs they were likely to face in the outage. The immediate outcomes: (1) Leaders reported greater confidence that when their direct reports encountered MOTs, they would behave according to nuclear industry standards; (2) employees reported greater confidence that when they did the right thing in a MOT, plant leadership would support them (“have their back”).

I.B. Results

The spring 2017 refueling outage was the most successful outage in plant history: zero recordable injuries, zero site HU injuries, zero ODMIs, and 99.9% scope completion—a significant improvement over the previous outage. Employees continue to invoke the concept—and because employees are consistently engaging in the right behaviors, supported by their leaders—plant performance continues to improve. Recently, TISAR hit zero and the plant is in its longest period without a recordable incident...all with increased megawatt output. The plant was removed from special focus and received a “2” rating from INPO. They are currently working toward an INPO “1” rating.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The MOT concept resonates with both leaders and employees and the MOT exercise is an effective means to minimize HU risks.