



Case Study

Curiousmind helps one of Australia's largest Energy Companies achieve their best safety records ever.

IMPROVING SAFETY LEADERSHIP WITH CURIOUSMIND

THE CHALLENGE

With a mandate to improve safety from the parent company, a culture survey identified invisible leadership and poor alignment and engagement as critical issues inhibiting improved safety.

THE SOLUTION

Rather than employ external safety professionals to deliver a comprehensive 2.5 day internal safety awareness program, it was decided to engage curiousmind (CM) to develop internal leaders as facilitators.

THE RESULTS

- The best safety results ever
- Improved morale
- Significantly improved line management strength

Curiousminds extensive
experience in both
personal and professional
development ensured
lasting cultural change



THE CHALLENGE:

In a heavily engineering dominated leadership team that was expected to deliver a program with over 300 PowerPoint slides, the first challenge was to gain agreement that dry, information loaded presentations could do more harm than good.

Strong them and us attitudes between management and the workforce, made worse by some legacy resentment after two fatalities suggested we needed to find ways to help put issues aside as quickly as possible. Large geographical distances between sites and head office also contributed to this.

Numerous examples of poor communication further strengthened these attitudes. A common issue, for instance, was workers sending in a report about a rusty handrail (or similar) and never hearing anything in response other than to notice the handrail still there two years later. This poor responsiveness had led to beliefs that management either didn't care or wasn't competent. Also, some well-intentioned safety initiatives, for example; recording and publishing the number lost time injury free days and subtle competition between sites around these figures may have been encouraging people not to report minor incidents.

The strong technical nature of much of the information required an innovative approach to delivery. How could we keep people focused for two and a half days and retain what they've heard?

Curiousminds
cultural change
expertise has been
developed over
twenty years
working in the oil
and gas, mining,
finance, IT,
education and
public sectors
across Australasia,
S.E Asia and the
Middle East



THE SOLUTION:

To meet these challenges, CM proposed a 2-day facilitation skills program for 25 senior leaders. The focus was on helping them develop stronger, more trust and respect-based relationships by engaging the workforce in conversations about their experiences of safety.

With many years' experience in both the personal and professional development space CM was able to help these leaders recognise the importance of developing EQ to enhance their ability to lead, communicate and build trust-based relationships.

The initial training also identified strong biases towards a "telling" culture and PowerPoint overload. We then taught essential facilitation skills including engagement, asking questions, storytelling, being vulnerable (sharing their mistakes fears etc.) and listening.

Curiousmind facilitators / coaches then attended approximately 15 of the 25 programs run by this group to nearly 300 managers and supervisors. We worked as coaches, debriefing each facilitation team (4 managers per program) after each module and at the end of the program.

This coaching proved so useful CM was approached to train a further 40 mid-level and front-line managers as facilitators (safety leaders) for the rollout to all staff and contractors. A team of 6 CM facilitators / coaches were also contracted to attend and provide coaching on 65 programs over the next

two years. CM developed a range of specific metrics and a purpose-built database to monitor each managers progress.

CM advised on innovative ways to present the information and keep the attendees engaged. In one of the most potent examples, a manger began his module with an original question that stimulated such deep conversation with the whole audience that all of his objectives were realised without the need for any supporting slides.

We were also requested to deliver our signature piece on Self Awareness on each of these programs (consistently rated as the most impactful module). This module became part of the vernacular across most sites becoming a useful tool at morning toolbox meetings as a fit for work assessment – the thinking being, if you're not present (tired, frustrated, worried etc.), you're unsafe.

Facilitating these programs, with the CM coaching, effectively became a two-year leadership development program for all internal managers.

While not a direct objective of the program, it became abundantly clear that managers who were involved in the project developed significantly improved communication, influencing and team building capability and confidence.

Because the training was necessarily quite technical, we agreed that some follow-up "soft skills training would benefit all managers and supervisors. CM facilitators delivered 20 one-day workshops on both Engaging Hearts and Minds and Advanced Communications skills (influence and Critical Conversations).

With over 1400 staff and contractors trained CM was then asked to strengthen line management ability to support the message back in the workplace. CM personnel shadowing 108 supervisors (across all sites and ocean platforms), coaching them in their daily interactions with their team members. The success of this approach led to us being invited back the following year to repeat the process.

During this time, CM also facilitated two, three-day team alignment workshops with the executive team as well as several all site team alignment workshops.

After the program, CM was asked to help improve meeting efficiency and effectiveness at the gas plant. Management estimated nearly 1000 staff hours per day were being taken up by frequently poor quality or unnecessary meetings that didn't achieve objectives and were impacting on morale. CM facilitators attended and videoed 20 meetings from the SLT to morning toolbox meetings. We then analysed these with a linguist to determine where and why meetings weren't achieving their objectives.

Several extremely well-run meetings helped provided a template for success. With all this data, we were able to develop short, targeted (2-3) hour workshops for meeting presenters and meeting chairs.

Within a few weeks, this training was credited with improving meeting efficiency, engagement and morale with an estimated saving of \$150,000 / month.

ABOUT CURIOUSMIND



Curiousmind has been the coming together of a team of passionate change agents. With over thirty years' experience in the personal and professional development sphere CM facilitators and coaches have unified around the key to engagement.

Curiosity is the catalyst for all forms of engagement leading to improved exploration and discovery, creativity, problem solving team bonding and learning.

We have uncovered several key educational and managerial assumptions that actively suffocate people's curiosity.