



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 head office, a culture survey identified low visibility 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 some 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 reports about faulty plant or equipment and never hearing anything in response other than to notice no change two years later. This poor responsiveness had led to beliefs that to management, safety was just another fad.

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? How do we make safety "fresh" for people who may have attended several thousand safety meetings? How do we shift attitudes like "you're killing us with safety procedures, management don't really care, or the workers are being careless?" How do we move safety from a another task to be complied with to a genuine Safety First Value?

Curiousminds
cultural
transformation
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 an initial 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 meaningful 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 them developing EQ to enhance their ability to lead, communicate and build trust so they could influence changes in attitude and behaviour.

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. With diverse backgrounds in management, health,



Andrew Lee on an oil platform in Bass Strait

journalism, law, acting, neuro-science and personal development the CM team immediately earned the trust and respect of all these managers.

CM developed a range of specific metrics and a purpose-built database to monitor each manager's progress over 18 months.

CM advised on innovative ways to present the information and keep the attendees engaged. In one of the most potent examples, a manager 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 not safe.

Cultivating curiosity has proven to be an effective way of improving engagement. By shifting from "telling" to asking the leaders noticed marked improvements in how the audience participated.

Facilitating these programs, with the CM coaching, effectively became a two-year leadership development program for all the 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 shadowed 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. The focus of these initiatives was building trust and confidence in conducting difficult conversations.



Safety Leadership Programs

CM is currently running safety leadership programs in several utility, engineering and mining support companies. These programs are designed to build on the back of existing safety processes to help drive a safety-first culture. Most of these programs begin at the executive level, cascading down to front line team leaders.

The objective is always the same, get people curious about themselves, each other and better ways of working together to build strong safety cultures.

*The course you rolled out to ***** Engineering, for me personally was the most informative and insightful course I have ever attended. Your course changed my thought process to better understand my role as a supervisor.*

The Safety Leadership work book along with the notes & photographs of your hand written information, has also provided myself with a new range of tools to apply to safety & productivity in the work place.

Your ability to teach your techniques and apply these processes is brilliant.

*Thank you.
Mark Andrews*

ABOUT CURIOSMIND

Curiousmind is the coming together of a team of passionate educators and change agents. With many years' experience in the personal and professional development sphere and diverse career backgrounds CM facilitators and coaches have unified around a desire to re-engage people with their innate curiosity.

We see curiosity as 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. By unveiling these assumptions, we help engage and empower people to learn and change.

