

BMTFed Newsletter

No. 61 - September 2015

BMT for Safety Conference
18th & 19th November
Manchester, UK

TICKETS ON SALE NOW



Coaching Workshops

We will be holding a series of one day BMT coaching workshops at various locations around the UK. The first three are:

London: 3rd November 2015

Edinburgh: 12th November 2015

Manchester: 10th December 2015

For tickets and more information, click on the links above or call Nicola on 07788 252 410.

The Pareto Principle

Pareto's principle says that:

80% of value comes from 20% of activities

64% of value comes from 4% of activities

50% of value comes from 1% of activities

If you are short on time and need to be really focused then simply rerun your first Pareto two more times. You will then find the 1% of activities that will deliver 50% of the value.

Delivering Feedback

By Rachel Edwards

I recently overheard someone remarking to their colleague that they wanted to give another colleague feedback, but felt worried about what would happen if he said what was on his mind. The listener replied, "I think you should tell him. He needs to know and should be professional enough to receive feedback in the spirit it's given."

Reflecting back on the conversation later, I was thinking about who's on my 'say what's on my mind to, I trust they'll respond well' list, and who's in the 'question mark, might respond badly' category. All of the former are people I trust – behaviourally speaking, over time we've reinforced each other for delivering feedback. Sometimes the content has been a bit thorny or uncomfortable, but often it's been positive, so the balance is right between positive and constructive. Additionally, the relationship is robust enough for the feedback to be an insight not a threat.

So it's not a question of whether people are professional enough to hear the feedback, or even how much they 'need' to hear it, but whether our relationship has been shaped up to a place where we can deliver the message, and have it land in the place it was meant to. That means deliberate practice over time, getting the relationship primed so that when we really need to say something, we've already created the environment where we can.



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Behavioural Management Techniques (BMT) is a blend of applied behavioural science tools and project management skills. BMT is used to improve business and safety performance.



A Bit of Perspective

By Lisa Kazbour

There's a danger in trying to apply BMT or behavioral science without good use of perspective taking, especially when it comes to safety. Too often I've seen ABC analyses of environments that lacked the perspective of the performer, and merely reflected the attitude of the safety professionals on site.

Perspective taking is hard as a safety professional in the same way that it's hard when a non-smoker might view a smoker. As a non-smoker the first consequences that come to mind for smoking are all bad (cancer, lung disease, death). Given this analysis, one might conclude you'd have to be crazy to try smoking in the first place – unfortunately this analysis lacks the smoker's perspective. Keep in mind, if behavior is occurring there is a source of reinforcement.

When we ask groups to give us an ABC analysis for safety violations we routinely get consequences like "death", "injury", and "get written up by supervisor". Given these consequences it would be hard to understand why anyone would dare violate policy. The problem with this approach is that these are the consequences from the safety professional's point of view – not the worker's.

In order to effectively change behavior, especially in the realm of safety, we must be willing to take the performer's perspective when analyzing behavior. This means we have to let go of our own opinions and judgments, and evaluate the environment for what it is. Only with a full and complete understanding of why behavior is or is not occurring, are we likely to be successful in changing it.

Barriers

By Denis O'Hora

Identifying barriers is very important. Incentivising behaviour without removing barriers (or at least admitting them) reads as dishonest or crazy; your people feel like you won't help them, but you expect them to hop to your tune with renewed enthusiasm. Behaviourally, nasty consequences are more powerful than nice consequences so you have to get rid of the nasties to give the nice stuff a chance.

Shades of BMT

- It's up to leaders to focus on wealth creation. If they focus on loss aversion, this stifles the very discretionary effort that is at the heart of wealth creation.
- Trusting and rich relationships breed discretionary effort.
- An exec meeting at 8am every day isn't micro-managing, it's nano-managing.

Behavioural Insights

By Bob Cummins

For at least 12 years, we have been banging the BMT drum. Knocking out a perpetual beat of tenets supporting the use of behavioural science in business, home and life. Sometimes we felt like a lone voice, preaching evangelistically to a world smothered in bureaucracy, but often we have received motivation to continue to bang this drum through the fantastic results and achievements that we have witnessed through our clients.

At the start of September, Lynn Dunlop and I attended a conference in London. The conference was called Behavioural Exchange 2015 and it was organised by the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT). The BIT is a social purpose company jointly owned by the UK government, Nesta (an innovation charity) and its employees. The BIT was the world's first government institution dedicated to the application of behavioural sciences. Their main objectives are to –

- Make public services more cost-effective and easier for citizens to use;
- Improve outcomes by introducing a more realistic model of human behaviour to policy; and wherever possible,
- Enable people to make 'better choices for themselves'

On September 15th 2015, Barack Obama issued the Executive Order – Using Behavioral Science Insights to Better Serve the American People. He said, "A growing body of evidence demonstrates that behavioral science insights can be used to design government policies to better serve the American people."

It appears that we are no longer a lone voice, it appears that there may finally be recognition for the role behavioural science can play in making things better.

To the future!