



“It occurred on a **Monday**, which are **notoriously busy days**...there were **5 or 6 MICU consults pending**, and they were **really sick patients**, but we moved someone. **All the right things were done** from the beginning...**lab results were back within 30 minutes**...**within an hour of the patient’s arrival we knew what we were dealing with**, we knew the right thing to do, **we started the loading dose** [of the antidote], so that case started off beautifully... **but that was the end of anything right being done in that case...**”

(Senior Physician’s Assistant)

High Reliability...

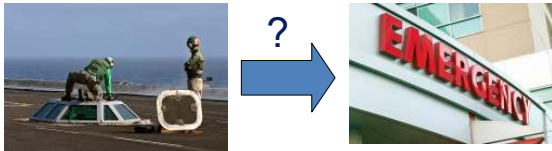




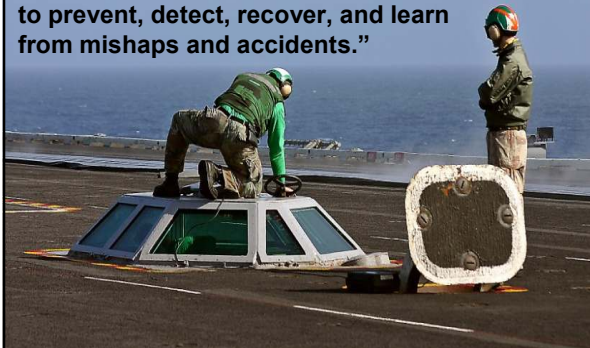
High Reliability Organization (HRO) Characteristics

- Operate in an unforgiving social and political environments
- Have limited opportunities for learning through experimentation
- Have potential for adverse consequences
- Have potential for surprise and unexpected events

HROs and Healthcare



“Medicine is not unique among high-risk, high-reliability industries because it too is concerned with learning how to prevent, detect, recover, and learn from mishaps and accidents.”



2 Basic Approaches

Anticipation/
Prevention

Resilience

HROs Recognize That Perfection is Elusive...

“Human fallibility is like gravity,
weather, and terrain--just another
foreseeable hazard.”

Aaron Wildavsky, 1991

Resilience


The only realistic goal of
safety management in
complex healthcare
organizations is **resilience** -
**to develop a maximum
capability to catch, correct,
and learn from surprises
as they arise** - to develop a
kind of intrinsic resistance to
operational hazards.

(adapted from Carthey, de Leval, Reason,
2001)



How Do HROs Do It?

“Safety does not reside in a single person, device, or department, but emerges from the interactions of components of a system.”



Mindful Organizing Requires:

- Respectful interaction**
- Heedful interrelating**
- Mindful practices**

Leaders Must Build Norms of Respect By Encouraging

1. **Trust** – People must be willing to trust the reports of others and be willing to base their beliefs and actions on them;
2. **Trustworthiness** – People must be trustworthy observers and report honestly so that others can use their observations in coming to valid beliefs;
3. **Self-respect** – People must maintain self-respect, meaning they have to respect their own perceptions and try to integrate them with the reports of others without belittling others or themselves.

Leaders Must Encourage Heedful Interrelating

Make sure that everyone understands:

1. the goals of their work unit;
2. how their job fits together with other people's jobs to accomplish these goals;
3. and the importance of doing their work taking both of these things into account.

Establish Mindful Practices

Focus
on
Failures

Avoid
Simplification

Attend to
Operations



Build
Resilience

Defer to
Expertise



Establish Mindful Practices

Failures



Simplification



Operations



Resilience



Expertise



Members of Resilient Organizations...

1. Spend time identifying what can go wrong and talking about mistakes and how to learn from them;
2. Pool diverse perspectives to get a good picture of the situations they face;
3. Discuss alternatives as to how to go about everyday activities and problems;
4. Continually develop people's skills and abilities;
5. Take advantage of the unique skills of one's colleagues even if the person is of lower status in the organization.

Two Final Caveats

Hubris is the enemy!

CAUTION CAUTION

Safety and reliability are perishable!



A well-designed organization is not a stable solution to achieve, but a developmental process to keep active.
