

Safety Culture and major accident risk

Peter Mason

Our Experience



NATIONAL GAS SHIPPING COMPANY LIMITED



Balfour Beatty



Characteristics of Major Accidents

Texas City Refinery



Herald of Free Enterprise



Longford



Piper Alpha

Major Accidents are systems failures

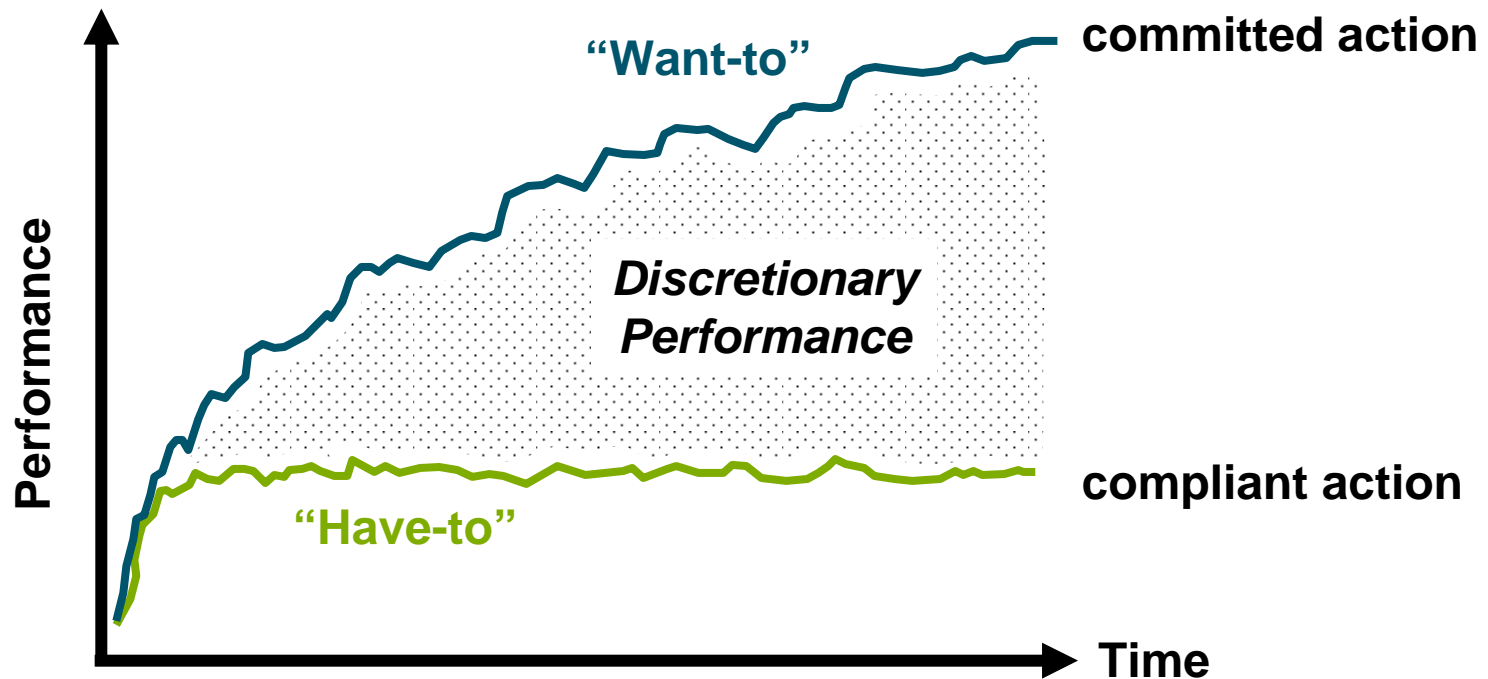


All characterised by:

- *Latent conditions (ticking away in the background)*
- *Degradation of norms (acceptance of how we do things)*
- *Flawed decision making (lack of challenge in groups)*
- *Soft signals (not picking up messages)*

YET..... they all had a positive focus on personal safety

How you show up as a leader



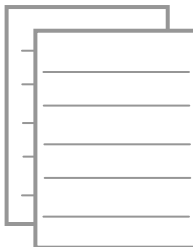
1. Behaviour is about choice.
2. People choose the behaviour they adopt.
3. Personal leadership influences this choice.

**“Learning is a social activity –
it requires a human touch”**

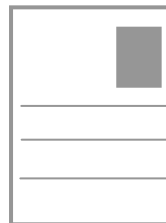
– M.I.T.

Yet as an organisation we continue to send...

REPORTS



HI-PO



**ACCIDENT FREQUENCY
RATES AND STATISTICS**



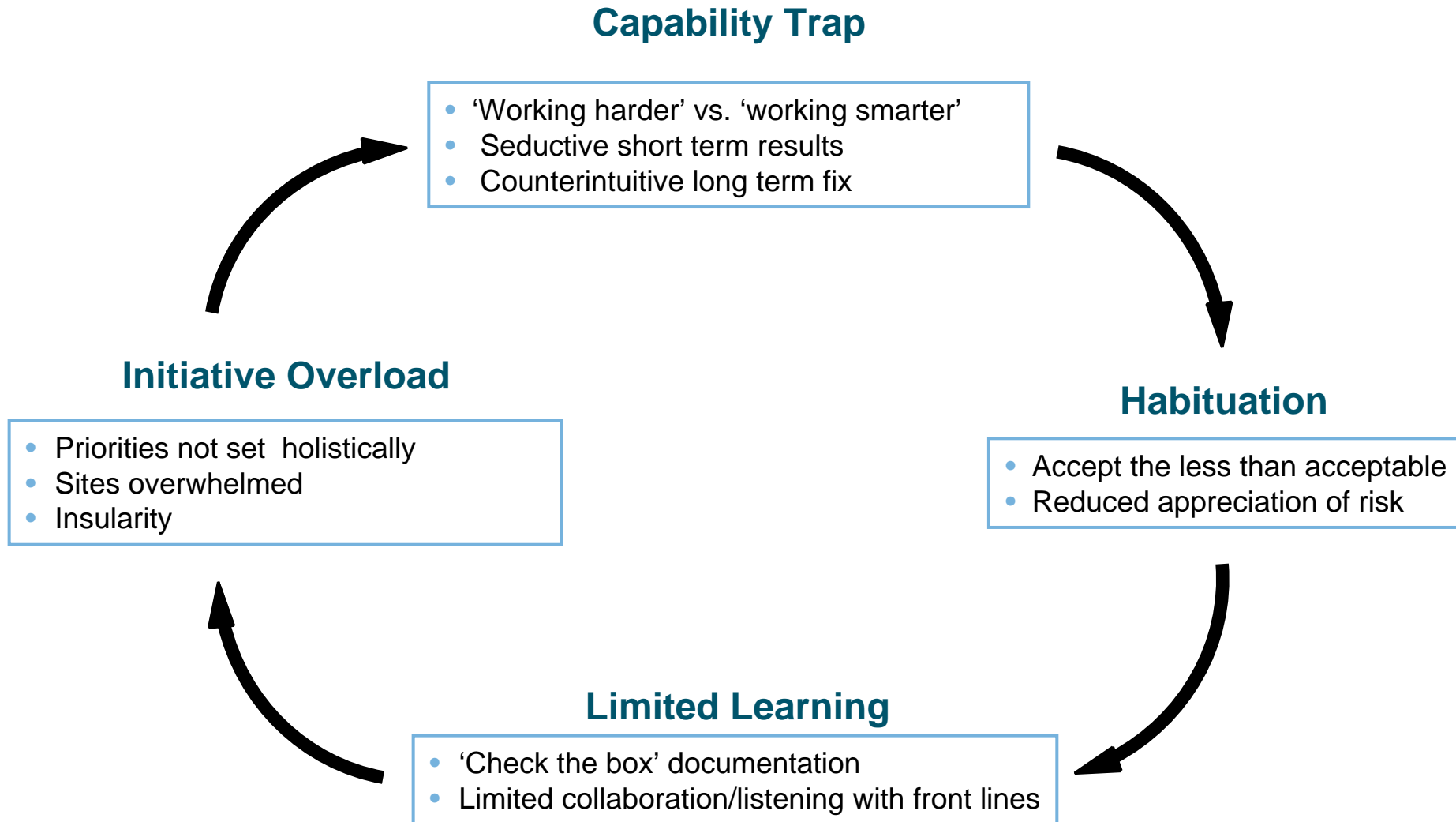
**LESSONS
LEARNT**



How have you learned about an accident/incident?

1. **Read** a report/ incident investigation/ etc
2. **Attended** a sector specific meeting/ presentation/discussion group
3. **Visited** the organisation and **talked** with the workforce





Some questions to ponder

- Are you knowingly accepting practices or conditions that you would have deemed unacceptable 24 or 48 months ago?
- Does your organizational culture encourage or discourage “creative” solutions to operating problems that involve circumventing procedures?
- What is the basis for deeming risks acceptable – particularly those associated with high consequence events?
- Is there a strong reliance on the observation that serious incidents have not occurred previously, so they are unlikely to occur in the future?



- **Managing the Risks of Organisational Accidents** – James Reason
- **Failure to Learn**; the BP Texas City Refinery disaster – Andrew Hopkins
- **Lessons from Longford** – The Esso Gas Plant Explosion – Andrew Hopkins
- **The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky technology, Culture and Deviance at NASA** – Diane Vaughan
- **Organizational Culture and Leadership** – Edgar H. Schein
- **Flirting with Disaster: Why accidents are rarely accidental** – Marc Gerstein
- **The Black Swan**; the impact of the highly improbable – Nassim Nicholas Taleb
- **Risk**; A philosophical introduction to the theory of risk evaluation and management – Nicholas Rescher

Contact us...



www.lloydmasters.com

lloydmasters

Thames House 5 Church Street
Twickenham Middlesex TW1 3NJ

t +44 (0)20 8917 4520

f +44 (0)20 8917 4521

e info@lloydmasters.com

www.lloydmasters.com