



Kevin Crawley: Health, Safety and Quality Director - Cleanaway Ltd

BEHAVIOURAL SAFETY USER CONFERENCE 2003

Hello everybody. I am the Health, Safety and Quality Director at the Cleanaway group. I am joined today by two of the observers from the behavioural safety programme, Tony Woods and Peter Miles, who I am sure will be happy to answer questions at the end.

I think from listening to the presentations today, that it is safe to say Cleanaway are the babies of the behavioural safety family.

The presentation I am going to give today is about the 6 months work that we have been running on trial for our UK business. Hopefully you will learn something about what we have achieved and from the problems we have had from implementing this type of programme.

Just to set the scene a little, Cleanaway are a global waste management and support services organisation. We work both here and in Europe, also Australia and Asia. In the UK we have 90000 work sites. I know the gentleman from Scottish water referred to 'if you think you have problems?' well here comes 'if you think you have problems 2". Our workforce actually visits within the course of a year 90000 different operational sites from single households to large conglomerate organisations. In the UK we have 3000 vehicles and employ 8000 staff.

The range of business functions we provide in the UK are principally; municipal and industrial waste management, facilities management, landscaping, high tech disposal and transfer, recycling of materials, technical waste management of hazardous substances and total waste management solutions to the industry. That is the P.R. In reality I suppose we are just bin men with some fancy equipment.

We sat down at the beginning of this year, and decided as part of the continual improvement cycle, we wanted to do something different, and we wanted something where we could get workforce participation in the safety effort. We looked at a lot of alternatives. We bought in some people from BST in the early days, because we realised we were not experts in the field of behavioural safety. We needed some guidance as to what we needed to do to fit this into a multicultural organisation like Cleanaway. That committee was made up of people from senior management, directors, safety representatives and people from the workforce. We put together a plan, a rollout programme for what we later called the '&bin' programme, which stands for 'behavioural injuries nullified'.

It was impractical to try and roll this out across our whole organisation considering we have 90000 sites to visit in a year. So what we decided to do is cover 12 strategic locations in the UK that cover our main work orientation. 5 were the municipal collection business and the rest were our technical waste landscaping business.

We wanted this process to be workforce owned and developed. We were going to provide the funding and facilitate it, but what we wanted was to say to the workforce 'this is your chance to tell us what your problems are'.

Now as you can imagine, working in the waste management industry is not the best environment to attract the highest calibre of people. If you go and look at your dustbins late at night at the waste you have in there, that is the type of waste our people are dealing with day in, day out, sometimes in some quite dangerous situations. I know we work at four in the morning in Lambeth and Brixton and I know it's not uncommon to find dead bodies in dustbins. So it really does attract a certain type of individual, and that gives us a big challenge as to how we change the culture of those individuals. And how we get them to adopt the safety effort we want.

We have tended in the past as a business to focus on accident statistics, and yes, they tell a story, but there is much more happening in safety we have to recognise. We wanted to see how we could improve working practices, reduce accidents and get that workforce participation in safety.

The steering committee sat down and came up with a plan as to how we could roll this out on a trial basis. We wanted to give it enough time and enough resources to say 'does this really work for our business?' Really we have an encompassed view there of what the programme was. In January of this year we chose the 12 locations. Then went to the workforce and through an election process we obtained safety champions, safety observers who would carry out this process for the trial period. We took those people away from the work environment and sent them on an intensive training course, on behavioural safety techniques and how we wanted behavioural safety to be implemented in Cleanaway. BST helped us enormously in developing that training and fitting it to Cleanaway.

Once that had been done the most important part to me was the communication element. How were we going to communicate this to the workforce so that they understand what we are trying to achieve? What we did was embark on a 6 week road show, where I as a global director, the UK health safety manager, the safety advisor from the business we were visiting, and the observers actually decamped to a site for 1 or 2 days and caught every individual working in that location. We done this by a multimedia presentation, we designed a 'B.I.N' leaflet that gave a brief summary of what the process was, an information sheet, a guidance sheet, some pens and some post it notes. That was to engender that involvement. That was over 6 weeks, and it was really a learning curve for me, because it was the first time I could stand face to face with individuals on a one to one basis and talk about there concerns because there was a fear culture in our business. Waste management is not really a nice business to be in, and I think over the years the business had developed a culture of 'get the job done and if you don't get out the door'. Well that's not the way to run a successful business; it's how to make that not happen that is the challenge.

Certainly a lot was learned from those 6 weeks and talking to every individual about what that process was and what it was trying to achieve.

Once that was done we sent the observers back into the workplace to carry out a number of benchmarking exercises. We took this additional route of producing safety observation sheets that were specific to the area of the business. This was about redesigning those falls, and going through the old accident statistics, the safety inspections, the audit reports, and coming up with the big issues that were effecting the workforce over a period. What we ended up with was a series of observation sheets for the different areas of the business.

We decided to implement the trial in April this year. Those sheets were then put into practice, and what we decided was to have an I.T. system rather than a paper system. So all the observations were carried out by the observers, and then they put all that information onto a database, which was then sent to a central facilitation, and central head office. This was then analysed on computer, with closure dates, actions and who had to actually take responsibility for moving this forward. This fell into 3 categories: either local level at the time of the report, line management within a reasonable time scale, or referred to senior management and the board of directors. This gave us a continual feedback loop. So if things were not getting resolved we could bring this up with the individual observers, and the individual sites, and make sure they were dealing with the issues.

That implementation process has actually been going on for 6 months now, and the last day of the trial is tomorrow, and I hope today is not a bad influence.

As of tomorrow we will really look at what we have achieved in the last 6 months. We have certainly achieved an improvement in health and safety, and I will look at some of our achievements shortly. But more importantly we have started that communication trail. Following the observations the observers sit down with their line manager and talk about health and safety and the issues that have been resolved. They talk about how they have spoken to the workforce and how they have dealt with their issues. Then it moves up into the senior management tier, and then ultimately to the board. So every board meeting we have we go through all the BIN observations, what's happened, how it was dealt with, who dealt with it. That's a very important development.

Along the way we had a number of peer review sessions. We got the observers together and worked out what we done wrong in the trial period, how we would move it forward, how we would change it. Those proved invaluable to getting the message across that this was not a static process, that it was continually moving along and improving What we achieved at the end

of the trial was to create a template that you could take into any area of that business, with a team of experienced observers, and going out into the field and making the process work. They are the best practice team, and they will be used in the future.

In November, I am currently preparing my board report on the whole process to make sure the business understands what the benefits are, what we have achieved, and how we should move forward.

Some of the quick lessons we have learnt

Certainly it gives the workforce a voice. It has raised communication levels. It has caused a lot of problems. It has caused confrontation. I myself have been face to face with people arguing my corner, but ultimately we have listened and taken on board what people have said.

Be flexible in order to make it work. Because of all our different business areas we couldn't make one system work for all those areas. It was because of the work of the observers coming up with specific issues and creating specific observation sheets that we have been able to fit it and make it work in all areas of the business.

Resistance must be overcome through perseverance. People do not like change. This is changing management. I don't believe we can view behavioural safety as standing alone. It must be built in to your current management systems. It should never be used as a panacea for all health and safety issues.

Do not skimp on training. At the end of the day you must train your observers and management as to what you observers are going to do.

The business must be the facilitator, not the driver. The workforce must see that the process belongs to them, and that they can change and add value to the process. It's not top-down; it must come from the observers and workers who are out there facing the risk.

If you don't promote it, it will fail. We had a 6-week road show. We had lots of materials, post-it notes, communications literature, and all sorts of goodies that brought this process into peoples' minds.

Observers must be from the workforce, not management. At Cleanaway having managers as observers does not work. Over the trial period we purposefully had one manager observing but it just did not work, and we had to replace him after 2 months, because the process was going nowhere. That is about fear and the culture of the people that work for us. We had to identify that there was a wall we could not breach. So we asked them "how can we make this work?" and they said "give us someone that we can talk to, knows what we do, and what risks we face, who can then feed that info back to you. So you as managers can manage the risk".

Safety costs. At the end of the day, doing a trial like this at Cleanaway cost about £90,000. We had to demonstrate the business would achieve a return on that outlay. But it does cost money to implement, and if you skimp on it, it will never work.

Sustainability breeds acceptance. Those first few weeks and months people will automatically be against what you are trying to do. Changing behaviour is not easy.

Develop IT based systems to support the process and make sure you can analyse and provide purpose validation to the process.

Best practice and lessons learned must be shared. So what comes out through the BIN process is discussed, then it is fed up through the business, in so changing safety procedures.

I'm going to show you something that gives you an idea of whereabouts we are. These are statistics of observations and to me that is pretty damn good. You look at one of our municipal sites, a waste management site, when we did our initial benchmarks we were looking at 30% safe observations. We are now, in week 24 up to 80% safe observations. That's at the end of a 6-month trial. At our Regents Park contract, that's the contract for maintaining all the royal parks. We started out at about 40% safe observations, and we were able to demonstrate all the time, through analysing and validating the data that we have increased our safe working environment, and that is what it is all about.

I'm going to give you a couple of examples. The median we are getting back from our sites at the moment is that we are seeing between a 25 and 35% reduction in accidents in the trial period. At one site in particular we have actually achieved a 79% accident reduction in 6 months - a fantastic achievement.

The future

I believe the way forward now is to adopt the BIN process as best practice. We now have a number of templates we can now put into our business areas, and provide a safety behavioural process.

We certainly want to continue to reduce accidents and improve working practices, and that is what the BIN process does. It's all about observations and bringing to the attention of people that there are different ways of doing things.

One of the things I have learnt is in the periods of time where it has not worked it has been down to resource. One of the things I have to do is to ask the business is whether we want to do it. Because if we do, there is certain areas of the business where we have to resource it centrally, and can I ask the business to do it, because when push comes to shove, they will put there resources elsewhere. So there is a big question about securing funds for sustainability, but I believe if the case is you put in you achieve.

Roll out to all business locations in 2004, and Roll out to all global business locations in 2005.

Engendering ownership from the workforce for safety issues is the number one aim. I was recently asked by my C.E.O. to explain the bin process, and I was just about to give him the big spiel when he said &in three words". So I thought about it and said, &talk, look and listen". I think if you adopt that theory, then you cannot go wrong.

Questions

"You said you were going to stop after so many weeks, are you going to stop all activities?"

Oh no, the process does not stop. What we said was the 6-month trial ends tomorrow. What we then have to do is go back to the business and give the business case for sustaining it and integrating it with our culture. But the BIN process will continue at our 12 locations, because we have already agreed it is the right thing to do, its just a case of going through hoops so we can secure the funding. We are not going to stop it now. The next stage is &how are we going to roll it out, the way we roll it out, and how we prioritise'.