

Three Strategies for Building Human Reliability in Technical Teams



THE PROBLEM

Many organizations see every error as a defect. And many leaders try to minimize errors without understanding them. This approach often causes a lot of confusion, frustration and mistrust. The result is often *more* unwanted errors, injuries, and incidents. Consider:

Common sense tells us to reduce human errors.
But some experts argue that humans don't cause errors.

Many believe that, "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it."
Yet some say counting errors stops us from understanding them.

Others say that defining the term "error" leads to useless debate.
Some even suggest that "errors" don't exist at all.

If you're confused, you're not alone.



THREE STRATEGIES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

Here's a brief overview of three core strategies used by high reliability teams around the world for 40+ years. Each strategy has pros & cons. So, each organization adapts them to fit their unique needs.



#1 APPLY DEFENSES

Give your team members effective, ready-to-use defenses like Peer Checks and Three-Step Communication. They can create quick wins. And team leaders find them easy to teach and observe in the field. But remember, classic defenses, when rigidly mandated, can easily become just another compliance tool that employees will avoid.



#2 IMPROVE PROCESSES

Find and fix hidden weaknesses in your procedures and policies throughout your organization. Assess, manage and improve the riskiest processes first. Correcting even one critical weakness may prevent hundreds of errors over time. Yet remember that many complex, creative jobs like troubleshooting can't be "proceduralized."



#3 BUILD RESILIENCE

Build up resources-in-reserve to help your teams recover from errors quickly like flight deck crews on aircraft carriers, wilderness firefighters, and other High Reliability Organizations (HROs). Building resilience can also help teams improve communication & trust. But remember, building resilience requires time, money, training & other resources-in-reserve which many leaders consider inefficient.

Clients get additional resources. To learn more, visit:
www.reliableorg.com