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Behaviour-Based Safety (BBS) Processes

The process of BBS comprises repeatedly going to an employee and making random observations till he reaches safe behaviours and learns the concept of self-observation and observing others for safe working behaviours.

2.1 FACTORS THAT ENSURE SUCCESSFUL BBS IMPLEMENTATION

Listed below are the various processes that are involved in BBS implementation. These processes are described in details later in this chapter.

- Observation and feedback.
- What does a BBS observer gain by actively caring?
- Problems encountered in observing and giving feedback.
- Reasons BBS observers may fail in observation and submitting feedback properly.
- BBS observers require good interpersonal skills.
- BBS observers' test of excellence.
- The eight P's BBS observers should follow.
- The concept of an active observer.
- What excited the observers.

2.1.1. Observation and Feedback

Observation and feedback by BBS observers involves the following:

1. Collecting observation data on specific safe and unsafe behaviours and classifying them by department, date, month, and time.
2. Regularly monitoring safety behaviours.

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- Observer's feedback should be constructive. For example, instead of just saying wrong tools were used to do a job, it should also be mentioned which is the right tool that should have been used.

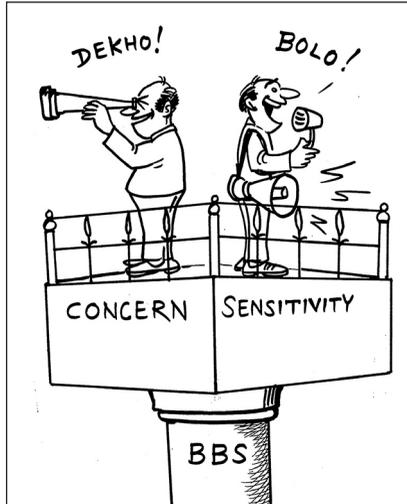


Fig. 2.1 The two tenets of BBS as said in Hindi.

- Observe both safe and at-risk behaviours and record detailed comments for problem solving, follow up, etc.
- Observe in two-member team, in which one should be experienced observer and the other a trainee observer.
- Observers should provide feedback on safe and unsafe behaviours to an observee in the form of a checklist.
- Observers should immediate feedback for correction of behaviours.
- Safety coaching fosters open communication about safety, and serves as a constant reminder for workplace safety.
- Safety observers and coaches in every department should use different critical behavioural patterns (e.g., use of PPE, body positioning, use of tools, etc.) on their respective checklists and coaching processes (e.g., problem solving, follow-up).

25. Some characteristics of a good BBS observer are:
 - Concern for others.
 - Self-initiation for correcting the observee.
 - Ability to develop a mutually agreeable insight on safe behaviour.
 - Training the observee in self-observation.
26. In order to make BOFP easier, the observer should know how to communicate in languages that employees understand well, get to the intellectual level of employees, and should never let his ego harm his job as an observer and safety coach. One may be a manager as BBS observer but during BOFP he is not a manager; and he is playing the role of BBS observer so that BOFP functions as if it's peer-to-peer.
27. Observers need to focus on behaviours rather creating issues out of unsafe work conditions or something else that is the management's responsibility. Also, observers should not expect work conditions and behaviours to change overnight.
28. Observers should keep observation and feedback process on daily basis.

2.1.2 What a BBS Observer Gains by Actively Caring

Actively caring (listening, praising, accepting) are very important aspects of BBS, and one needs to understand what does a BBS observer gain from actively caring.

Here are some responses of the BBS training participants:

- Positive and safe work culture.
- Increase in production.
- Increase in job satisfaction.
- Camaraderie amongst employees.
- Ownership of safe work processes.
- Enhancement of team spirit.
- Confidence amongst employees.
- Employees stop shying away from voicing their opinions and ideas.
- General happiness and peace of mind amongst employees;
- Free and frank exchange of ideas.
- Reduction in usage of unsafe work practices.

2.1.4 Reasons BBS Observers may Fail in Observation and Submitting Feedback Properly

A few more problems that are encountered in observing and giving feedback are:

- Observee responding in an aggressive manner.
- Observer giving feedback in the presence of other employees.
- Observer not following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP); He himself not following SOP.
- Communication gap between observer and observee.
- Feedback not being given in a proper way.
- Lack of rapport between observer and observee.
- Observer not knowing observee's job well.
- Observer who is not very patient when interacting with observees.
- Observer losing objectivity and getting personal with the observee.
- Lack of proper follow-up once feedback is given.
- Observer not interacting on a one-to-one level, but acting superior and more knowledgeable.
- Observer unable to convey the importance of an injury-free work culture.
- Observer cutting corners, for example, recording the behaviours of more than one employee on the same checklist.
- Observer not being proficient in giving feedback.

While making sure that these points do not hamper his job, a BBS observer should also not make the observation and feedback processes too much formal; or be dominating in his interactions with the observee. An observer should be sensitized to the fact that observees should be treated on a peer-to-peer level. A feedback based on mutual discussion and respect between observer and observee on safe as well as at-risk behaviours helps create a safety culture much faster.

Anyone, a manager or a worker, can be a BBS observer once he or she has been properly and formally trained. In an Indian chemical company, for instance, it was seen that three groups of BBS trainees, mostly managerial employees, successfully

conducted BOFP on groups of contract workers in three different geographical locations. This makes it evident that BBS-BOFP brings managers and workers closer and enhance camaraderie. It makes workers feel that senior people in the organization care for them for their safety and well-being.

2.1.5 BBS Observers Require Good Interpersonal Skills

The following interpersonal skills are critically required when any observer is giving his or her feedback:

- Trust-building ability; not displaying seniority, pride, or ego.
- Having high levels of patience when giving feedback; not being too formal or serious, but giving feedback in a formal, understandable, and may be even humorous manner; ability to listen and understand the observee speaks; displaying empathy with the observee; always being the more active participant in the feedback process and never looking low on energy; becoming a friend and not a boss; not to be under any kind of personal or professional stress when giving feedback; *and*, appreciating the safe behaviour of employees along with telling him where he has to do better.

The above interactive skills, when practised over a period of time, help a BBS observer in self-development so that the he or she can conduct BOFP effectively through active caring. These observers are not police inspectors going around and looking at unsafe conditions but they observe safety behaviours of employees/coworkers on a daily basis.



Fig. 2.3 How a good BBS observer should be

2.1.8 The Concept of an Active Observer

An *active observer* has the following characteristics:

1. Not critical and shows proactive behaviour.
2. Rectifies unsafe behaviour there and then.
3. Works with a positive and persuasive attitude.
4. Appreciates safe behaviour.
5. Takes a gentle and patient approach.
6. Action and solution oriented.
7. Explores unconventional ways and means.
8. Empowers colleagues and follows the bottom-up approach.
9. Is in continuous contact with other observers.
10. Result and analysis oriented.
11. Never ignores unsafe behaviour, but always stops and corrects.
12. Rectifies unsafe behaviour on the spot.

2.1.9 What Excited Observers Say

1. Earlier I thought of BBS as my optional work, now it has become a part of my life.
2. Save life is a great mission.
BBS is our holy ambition.
3. Unsafe behaviour and unsafe conditions.
Neither will we make it happen.
Nor we will let it happen.
4. The most important aspect of BBS is the 'number of observers in the plant' and 'how actively they act in correcting unsafe behaviours on regular bases'.
5. It's better to wear a little sub-standard helmet than not wearing one at all.