Facilitation Tip 13: Consider the Work Process

Cause Mapping® Method
Problem Solving • Root Cause Analysis

Rather than ending your incident investigation with a generic statement like "procedure not followed," the facilitator should drive the discussion to the steps in the work process. This will reveal more specific causes and, ultimately, sustainable solutions. It will also allow the discussion to focus on the steps of the process that didn't go well instead of what an employee/person did or did not do. This shifts the dialogue away from personal behaviors and onto systemic work processes and best practices.

By reviewing the work process you will:
- Minimize blame (and the perception of blame),
- Discuss the details of the task and where the specific breakdowns were and
- Increase the opportunity for work process improvements to create more reliable operating practices and procedures.

Facilitation Tip 13

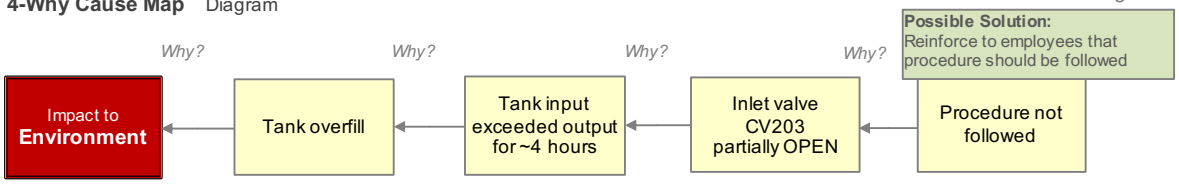
Watch this video that further demonstrates how to focus on the work process during your incident investigations.

(5 minutes)

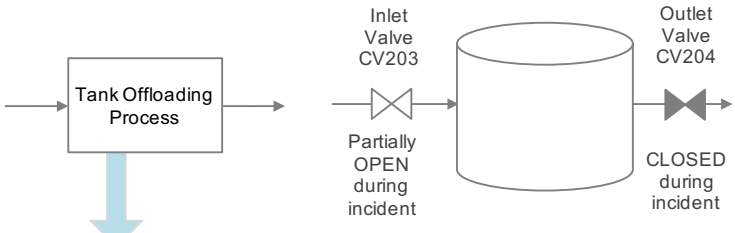
Tank Overfill

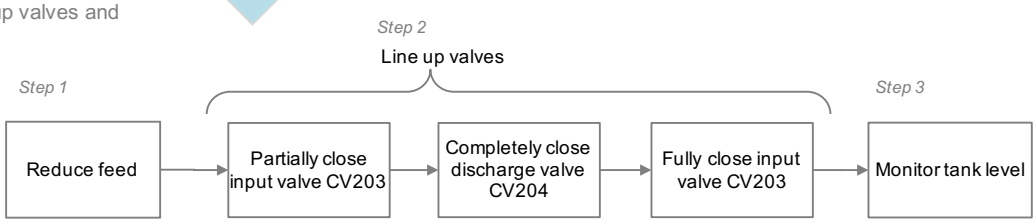
Generic causes result in generic solutions. Be specific in your investigation. Don't stop here. Dig into the work process.

4-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



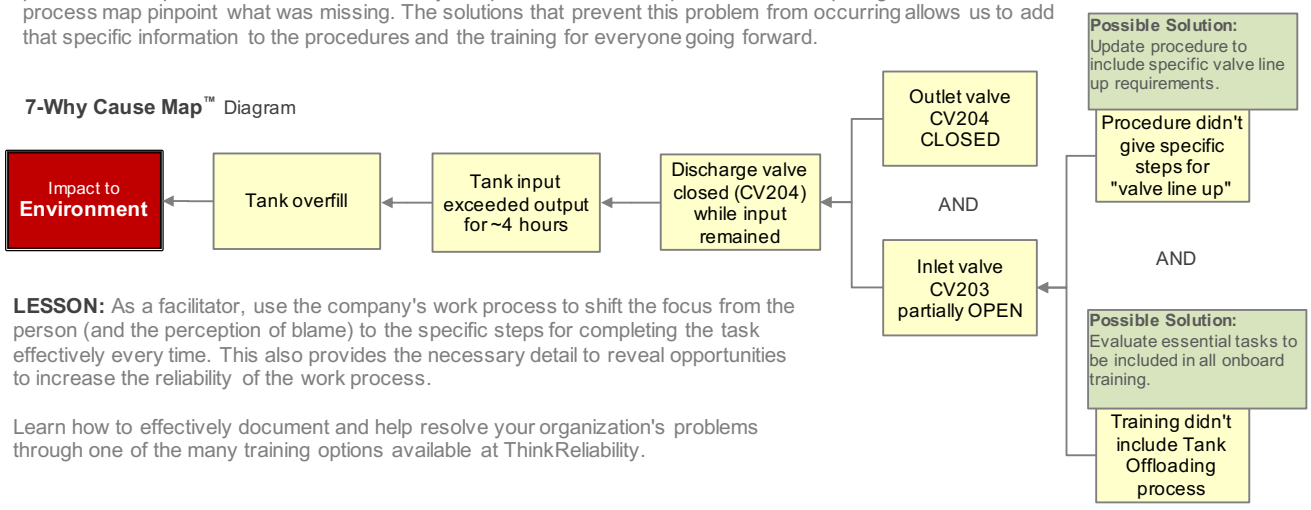
As we begin talking to the operator about the incident, they admitted to "messing up," they didn't follow the procedure. The facilitator should ask what is supposed to happen during offloading (what's written in the procedure, documented in training, etc.). The procedure stated just three steps to perform the end of the tank offloading process: reduce feed, line up valves and monitor the tank level.





Step 2, "line up valves," is not specific enough to ensure the task is performed correctly every time. As the discussion with the operator continues, we realize there are actually three specific steps that have to be performed in a particular order to successfully complete the valve lineup. The *Cause Map* diagram and the process map pinpoint what was missing. The solutions that prevent this problem from occurring allows us to add that specific information to the procedures and the training for everyone going forward.

7-Why Cause Map™ Diagram



LESSON: As a facilitator, use the company's work process to shift the focus from the person (and the perception of blame) to the specific steps for completing the task effectively every time. This also provides the necessary detail to reveal opportunities to increase the reliability of the work process.

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