

The 4 Es of a Reporting Culture



1. Establish trust

- Leaders communicate their commitment to building trust and reporting through a safety culture.
- Governance supports leadership commitment to establishing trust.



2. Encourage reporting

- The organization's incident reporting system is accessible by all staff, easy to use, enables data analysis to be done in a timely fashion, and includes reports of close calls and hazardous conditions.
- The organization's recognition program includes a feedback loop so staff know that action is being taken to address or fix safety problems they have identified.
- The organization clearly defines what types of incidents should be reported. Staff may not recognize that a daily annoyance is actually an unsafe event or unsafe condition.



3. Eliminate fear of punishment

- Those who report human errors and at-risk behaviors are NOT punished, so that the organization can learn and make improvements.
- Those responsible for at-risk behaviors are coached, and those committing reckless acts are disciplined fairly and equitably, no matter the outcome of the reckless act.
- Senior leaders, unit leaders, physicians, nurses, and all other staff are held to the same standards.



4. Examine errors, close calls and hazardous conditions

- Data is used to identify error-prone situations, the frequency at which they occur, and their potential severity.
- Data also is used to identify successes of the staff and the system.
- Learnings are used to help determine what to address, to strengthen the protective processes within the system, and to help staff identify the factors that lead up to a situation and what to look out for in similar situations in the future.

See Sentinel Event Alert Issue 60, "Developing a reporting culture: Learning from close calls and hazardous conditions," for more information, including examples of establishing trust, adopting a just culture to encourage reporting, learning from close call reporting, leadership engagement and accountability, as well as links to some videos that show leadership communicating commitment to just, reporting and learning cultures.