

A photograph of four firefighters in full protective gear, including helmets and air tanks, standing in front of a red fire truck. They are positioned near a building with a doorway. A large red fire hose is draped over the side of the truck. The scene is set on a gravel surface.

Case Study
**Behaviour-Based
Strategies and Workshops
to Prevent Severe Accidents
among Public Safety
Service Providers**



Determined to **prevent future losses**, the brigade turned to our client for support.

When a prominent work-based learning provider needed assistance with a training course for a prominent metropolitan fire brigade, we tailored a programme to deliver the desired result.

Client:	The UK's largest work-based learning provider
Timeframe:	2016
Size & Location:	UK
Main Services:	Human Factors Commands Skills
Industry:	Fire / Public Services

Public services aim to protect the health, safety and general well-being of the wider community. Their work often involves confronting risk and operating in high hazard situations. Prioritising safety is therefore essential, but also complex, as a comprehensive approach must address not only technical components, but also human factors. The fire brigade of a major metropolitan centre was reminded of this complexity after losing two firefighters in the line of duty. Determined to prevent future losses, the brigade turned to our client for support.

Our client is the UK's largest work-based learning provider, managing the training of over 20,000 learners worldwide at more than 8,000 employer sites. The company's headquarters is in London, while their workforce of 34,000 is spread across all key continents.



The fire brigade hoped to understand more thoroughly **the link between stress, fatigue and decision making**



Initial Situation and Requirements

A municipal fire brigade tragically lost two firemen in a blaze. Their deaths were later attributed to stress and fatigue, which in turn impacted the firefighters' decision-making capabilities. This disaster was the catalyst for implementing change within the organisation. In particular, the fire brigade hoped to understand more thoroughly the link between stress, fatigue and decision making and to adopt appropriate measures to prevent future disasters. They enlisted the help of one of the largest work-based training providers in the UK to provide them with practical training aimed at behavioural change. This training provider sought our expertise and assistance in fulfilling the fire brigade's requests.



Ignoring human factors can lead to **major incidents**, particularly in high hazard organisations or settings

Solutions

When our client approached us for support in meeting the fire brigade's requirements, we decided that the Human Factors Commands Skills workshop would fit the bill.

Taking into account human factors means paying attention to the interplay between an individual and their work environment. Ignoring human factors, on the other hand, can lead to major incidents, particularly in high hazard organisations or settings. Crew Resource Management concepts, borrowed from the aviation industry, provide a framework for addressing human factors. These concepts focus on non-technical skills, such as leadership, decision making, situational awareness, communication, stress and fatigue management and teamwork. Targeted training in these skills can reduce the number of incidents an organisation experiences. In addition to universal use in the aviation sector, these concepts have been adopted to improve safety in the oil and gas, rail and medical industries.

The Human Factors Commands Skills workshop consists of a 3-day programme in which the primary topics include: emotional intelligence, **leadership development**, decision making, communication, and situational awareness. Firefighters learned how people perceive leadership and how leaders can create an environment that encourages communication so that members of a team, regardless of their rank, feel comfortable speaking up. Brigade members were also made aware of different types of leadership and when to use one style over another, particularly in very fast-paced, dynamic environments where there is little time for analytical decision making. In addition, firefighters heightened their situational awareness skills, which allows them to adapt quickly to constantly changing circumstances and be mindful of their own and others' safety.

Throughout the programme, DEKRA delivered solutions with precision and care, encouraging participants to interact and introducing exercises and activities directly related to the firefighters' on-the-job challenges.



“The initial feedback from the Human Factors input that DEKRA delivered **has been excellent.** Two people even cancelled annual leave to attend the second session.”

Client’s closing statement

Solutions

Out of the 15 workshops that DEKRA Organisational Reliability delivered in 2016, this one scored the highest in terms of delegate satisfaction. The 5-day course was awarded 5 stars, and participant satisfaction was further evidenced by requests for additional training and deliverables. Delegates also recommended that the programme be offered more broadly to include the entire fire industry and other public service entities. Feedback regarding the workshop content and instruction was exceptional as well, highlighting the efficacy and credibility of course leaders who could draw on their personal experiences and background in the field.

Having received such overwhelmingly positive feedback, we felt our contribution to the project was a resounding success. It reinforced our belief in behaviour-based training and demonstrated the versatility of the Human Factors Commands Skills workshop. The concepts and strategies that form the workshop’s foundation can easily be adapted and customised to benefit any organisation, and we are keen to share it with others in future.



DEKRA Organisational & Process Safety Contact

DEKRA Organisational and Process Safety are a behavioral change and process safety consultancy company. Working in collaboration with our clients, our approach is to assess the process safety and influence the safety culture with the aim of making a difference.

In terms of behavioral change, we deliver the skills, methods, and motivation to change leadership attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making among employees. Supporting our clients in creating a culture of care and measurable sustainable improvement of safety outcomes is our goal.

The breadth and depth of expertise in process safety makes us globally recognised specialists and trusted advisors. We help our clients understand and evaluate their risks, and we work together to develop pragmatic solutions. Our value-adding and practical approach integrate specialist process safety management, engineering, and testing. We seek to educate and grow client competence in order to provide sustainable performance improvement. Partnering with our clients, we combine technical expertise with a passion for life preservation, harm reduction and asset protection.

We are a service unit of DEKRA SE, a global leader in safety since 1925 with over 48,000 employees in 60 countries and five continents. As a part of the world's leading expert organisation DEKRA, we are the global partner for a safe world. We have offices throughout North America, Europe, and Asia.

For more information visit
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