

KANOWNA BELLE GOLD MINES

CONTEMPORARY SAFETY MANAGEMENT PAPER

QCO/DME COAL INDUSTRY SAFETY CONFERENCE

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INTRODUCTION

The first thing I'm going to do is give you a brief overview of the Kanowna Belle Operation.

This is purely because I only have one simple message to tell you, and, if I don't build a story around it, it's not going to last 40 minutes.

This is Kanowna Belle commencing operations two and a half years ago.

When we started an enormous amount of energy went into making sure that things were done right, right back at the beginning.

The management team were carefully selected according to specific criteria. Their past performance, technical ability, and most importantly, their beliefs about people, what did they believe people were capable of doing.

And each manager in turn interviewed, selected and employed their own people in tune with the culture we were trying to create.

There is no personnel officer at Kanowna Belle.

Managers and department supervisors do all their own screening and employ their own people.

The first person to be employed at Kanowna was the Mill Superintendent and, he worked through the entire design phase of the operation.

How many times has a treatment plant or a specific piece of equipment been built and you hear someone say "I can't understand why they would put that there - it's ridiculous - you can't even reach it properly to do repairs - this sort of thing never ceases to amaze me". You've probably even said this yourself at some stage or another.

So how many times have we heard comments like that - plenty.

Again I refer back to Kanowna where we spent huge amounts of energy getting things right, right back at the start: Supervisors, Pit Technicians, Process Technicians etc. were all employed long before operations commenced and the available time was spent familiarising ourselves with the mine, the treatment plant, the processes, the whole operation.

There was huge amounts of training done in all critical areas.

Everyone was given a respectful title - we didn't want our people seeing themselves as a common old operator or fieldy. We didn't want our people being called just a labourer or worse still a "mill rat" or "rock ape".

We employed everyone on staff and were more than fair and equitable with the industry norms.

We offered people an opportunity to work at a mine where we really wanted to do things right.

An opportunity to get rid of all the old baggage, to break through the traditional barriers and to do things the best possible way. And that's how we started our operation, with this and a little bit more in mind.

We put all our effort in right at the start, just as this rocket ship illustrates:

Did you know, just as a bit of trivia, that a rocket ship uses 95% of its fuel within the first 10 seconds of its launch. It's a huge amount of energy that is used but that is what is needed to get the rocket where it's going!

And you know what, when you expend this amount of energy and point yourself in the right direction you'll find it is easy to break through the barriers that surround us.

If you don't put this amount of energy in up front then what you find is that you kick off and things are pretty rosy, but soon you end up being just a common old operation, a traditional, what you'd expect, everyday, mediocre, workplace.

So let's now go forward to the end point:

Obviously the journey there is quite stressful and there is a high amount of risk when you travel this path, but bearing all this in mind let's see what happens when you get there!

It's amazing

People can really do things they have never done before.

People behave differently in this sort of environment.

People can actually do backflips, triple backflips even. They can jump extremely high and do one handed push up's by the tonne.

Their mind is opened to the realms of a new environment and people begin to see things differently. They begin to act differently. People even begin to think of things they have never thought of before.

There is excitement. There is a feeling that your somewhere special and there is a lot of support. This is because you are on unfamiliar territory, a place where many have never been before. There is one thing which is very characteristic of this situation, and that is when somebody asks for a hand, everyone wants to bog in and help, everyone really wants things to go well, so people help out, they get stuck into it, and, its all genuine - there is no facade - you can usually tell when people are for real and when they are not.

And that's one reason why my colleague and I are here today, we believe in this approach, we believe it is the right way to do business. It's not just management who believe in this or senior supervisors etc. it's us, the people, the large majority of the workforce.

Management have put the faith and trust in us to do all sorts of things, even deliver conference papers. Many of us off the shop floor have never even been to a conference, let alone deliver a paper at one.

There has been a huge amount of responsibility placed on everyone's shoulders and guess what, as a manager you have to be prepared for some stuff ups - it's never smooth sailing when you take this course - but then what course is?

All of the problems and hiccups you experience along the way are merely opportunities to reinforce the trust you have in your people and the way you do things.

On that note I would like to provide you with some detail about how I see things in my department, in my work area. What we have looked at so far is merely an overview so let's get into some detail, some practicalities, some real hard examples of how all this works, how it all functions and how we as the employees of Kanowna Belle all feel about it.

Listed throughout this paper in your files is a series of perspectives, the way people see things on site.

Most of you will probably never read the papers from this conference - that's pretty much the reality from most conferences, but anyway, if you are interested there are a number of perspectives from people from all levels of the organisation so you can see that it's not just me talking or my colleague, it is the majority. This is all part of our culture on site, it is reflective of the way we do business.

So let me begin with my perspective of the operation from day one until present and how we have progressed to where we are to date, with real examples as the way I see it.

I haven't forgotten what I said at the beginning that I only have one simple message to say but I'll leave it to be said a little bit further down the track.

So here's my perspective as a.....

TECHNICAL SURVEY ASSISTANT

When interviewed for a position at Kanowna Belle, I was met by the Mine Superintendent . His stature was as expected; he was an authoritative figure, he was of a higher level, he was the boss and I was the subordinate. When questions were asked I made sure I gave the answers he wanted to hear. Remember - this is in the interview - I wanted the job. Kanowna Belle was given a lot of publicity, it was the biggest gold find in ten years, a world class orebody, rejuvenation in the Goldfields, a new mine - everyone loves something new, everyone wanted to find out what Kanowna Belle was all about.

The start of the operation saw a lot of different types of people from differing operations come on site. Differing opinions already developed mindset of how they thought things should be done, how were we going to make it all work.

MANAGER MINING

The Manager Mining came from a traditional background where the boss was the boss and the workers were told what to do. After all it was the Manager's job on the line if the department did not perform. He had the experience and qualifications, therefore he must be right. What could Pit Technicians, some who had difficulty walking and chewing gum at the same time contribute to the Management and running of the department. Even if he let them have a free rein, the workers would probably just become slack or at best run amuck and stuff things up.

He did not trust his own workforce!

TECHNICAL SURVEY ASSISTANT

Everyone was different, how are we going to get a team together, everyone needs inducting, everyone needs training.

Management staff had the experience and the knowledge to produce fantastic induction documents. They were at a new mine and now they could develop something they wanted.

We could have alternatively gone the very efficient route of hiring a consultant to develop our induction and training packages. But no - we took a gamble, a huge risk, we were given the opportunity, the chance to develop it ourselves.

Little did we all know where this would take us.

Initially, employees were broken down into groups. We were asked what we thought were important issues, what would you like to be told when you first arrive on site?

The induction process was starting to develop. Trust, faith and responsibility were being given to the employee.

Management were taking a huge gamble:

- Will this work?
- Will the manager lose credibility as an authoritative figure?

As new people came on site, the induction process was easily reviewed. If we felt any changes needed to be made, information added or removed it was easily done. We wrote it, we had the power to change it. There was no beaucroatic red tape to cut through.

Some feedback that came through from Supervisors in the mining department was that "I didn't realise that we had people with so much talent", "I didn't believe that the people I work with were capable of doing such tasks".

Management were realising that people, their biggest asset, can be utilised to perform tasks that they never ever dreamed of.

Tasks that were usually done by consultants, what better way for an induction process to develop - by the people. They are the ones that know all of the hazardous areas around the work environment, they are the ones that know why particular tasks are done before others.

The people are the perfect candidates.

The reins were starting to be let loose and a team was starting to develop. The induction manual was created. It contained seven modules created by seven groups of people. Each group of people were able to deliver their part of the induction to the new starter.

What better ice-breaker, they get to meet all of their fellow workmates before they even started work. Apart from being an induction it, was an interactive process. People could feel comfortable with their fellow employees straight away.

MANAGER MINING

Induction

The catalyst to the change was the mining induction. The easy option was to grab a few mining inductions from other operations and do a cut and paste job. Even better, someone external to the Company to knock up a \$10,000 document which would look pretty flash sitting on the bookshelf. But that is all it would be, a document filling up space on a bookshelf collecting dust which is used for the half to full day, boredom session otherwise known as the **safety induction**.

Not being totally happy with the cut and paste job, the mining department (including Pit Technicians and Survey Technicians) were split into groups of two and each developed a section of the induction. Time and resources were made available for each group to complete their section. The results were extraordinary. The cut and paste job went straight into the bin. How could Pit Technicians produce documentation that you could pay an outside service organisation thousands of dollars to produce?

The Manager had no idea at the depth of talent that existed in his department. That can exist in ordinary people who are given the opportunity. All of a sudden, he realised that his people did have something to offer.

Maybe they can be trusted to be given some responsibility. The reins didn't have to be held as tight as you think, if you are prepared to give people responsibility. But there were other changes also, for the first time people felt ownership for the operation. Each had made a positive contribution to the organisation. The other benefit was that for the first time, people worked **together** on our projects, we started to go from being a group of individuals into a mining team.

TECHNICAL SURVEY ASSISTANT

People were beginning to realise where they stood - they were being counted for. Their opinion was respected. They knew they could have a say in things, it was starting to feel good. The team runs the operation, not just Management. We have been given the responsibility and opportunity in the way we do business.

This was a very significant event at Kanowna Belle. You need to understand and be aware that the induction program was the major catalyst for all the events to follow.

This got the ball rolling, we were heading down a path of the unknown. Where was this going to take us? It was exciting as well as challenging.

We could resolve conflicting issues as a team. We would sit down and discuss everything openly. We knew that what we said made a difference. IT MATTERED.

This is a very risky area for a person in a managerial, leadership role.

Will they be looked upon as being weak, that they can't deal with critical situations?

No! - everyone knew that their opinion counted and the matter was usually always resolved without management having to do anything.

Management could have quite easily said what they wanted to happen to resolve issues.

This would maintain their credibility as a leader, it would reinforce the sense of being powerful, but was this conforming to what we were trying to achieve? Was it developing teams and interaction between people? Definitely not, it was reverting back to being two separate entities "Management", "Employees". The way things started when everyone first came on site.

MANAGER MINING

The Department Meeting

The department meetings started as per most typical meetings involving a department, the Manager stands up at the front talking, everyone else gets bored. But the structure changed by releasing the reins further. Let the department run the meeting, let them bring up issues and discuss them, where the manager participates not as a manager but as a member of the group. While the first meetings were awkward, after awhile people felt at ease with the concept and that there was no fear of any recriminations about what they said. We the mining team were able to discuss and resolve highly controversial issues.

In most cases, the employees were harder on themselves than the Manager's would have been. Yes, most people given responsibility but also accountability are able to make rational decisions that, given the full information, do account for not only their needs but at the same time meet the needs and goals of the operation.

The Manager could trust them. But just as importantly the people trusted the Manager.

TECHNICAL SURVEY ASSISTANT

Our department meetings were starting to become more interactive, people would speak up, people would talk about issues they felt were important, smiles were starting to be seen on faces. A vast difference to the times when management did all the talking and the employees couldn't wait to get out of there.

Can anyone here relate to this?

Is this what's happening in your operation?

We can talk about anything, issues from a personal level or information we'd like to know about at a managerial level.

The barriers were being broken down, Management had taken the risk and the rewards were starting to pay off.

The extension of the induction manual was empowerment projects. Safety empowerment projects, training empowerment projects, mines rescue empowerment projects etc.

Individuals were given the opportunity to research and develop training packages.

Management was placing all the responsibilities on the employees to develop a package that would be used to train other employees.

What do you think the employees felt like?

It was their job, their task, no-one else was going to do it for them, it was their big chance to make a mark.

This was a hard slog, it wasn't easy, there was a lot of pain and suffering. We had to learn training skills, key elements to ensure that a training package was going to be effective that the information (written) was relevant.

Such packages including eye protection, respiratory protection, light vehicle training were developed and what remarkable packages they were. They had to be, the individuals made sure they did a good job - they didn't want to stuff up, **everyone** was going to be seeing these packages. It's a reflection of that individual.

Conducting the training package was the next step. If they thought that developing the training package was difficult, now they had to deliver the package in front of a room full of people 20 bodies, 40 eyes all staring straight at you. You wanted to get it right.

Personal skills were developed, how to communicate with people, how do we get people to learn?

I've put all this time and effort into developing a training package, it's going to be totally useless if it's not **effective** at getting the information across.

Interaction, participation, adult learning are all valuable issues that contribute to having a successful training package.

The empowerment project had extremely valuable key elements which not only was effective in training but very effective for personal attributes, not just in the work environment but also with real life issues.

You would be surprised at all the spin-offs and outcomes that indirectly relate to such projects.

Individuals develop many valuable attributes - a sense of achievement, fulfilment a sense of importance. The focus has been put on them. How rewarding is self satisfaction?

At Kanowna Belle we don't give out safety awards if we achieve a good safety record. People are recognised through their efforts in developing the environment they work in. They are given opportunities to represent the Company by receiving awards, attending functions or conferences (just like I'm doing right now). The Manager Mining could be standing here, our Safety Facilitator could be delivering the paper. But no, it's me a shop floor worker representing the company, I have been given the responsibility, the trust and the faith through our management staff to be here today.

It's a very challenging task that gives you a sense of importance and fulfilment - it's an opportunity that would be very rare at other places, and most of all it gives you a sense of pride and self satisfaction.

When visitors arrive on site - having heard about all types of training taking place - instead of management doing the show and tell the person who developed the training package talks to the visitors about the subject.

Other people are recognising the effort and seeing the results, they want to see how we're achieving this.

There's no secret formulas, we don't have gifted people, we're not lucky - we're people like you, like the people that work for you.

We wanted to get somewhere, we had a vision, a goal, that we wanted to achieve and we could see that it was achievable. All efforts were concentrated, energy was focused into developing an environment that was self supporting.

You may think this was developing safety documents etc.

In fact at Kanowna Belle we don't have a safety department, we don't have safety rules, we don't have a safety officer that walks around checking whether your wearing your safety glasses, we don't have a safety board showing LTI's etc. we don't have safety awards, the only thing we have to do with safety is a safety policy. Our goal within the policy is

To be the Safest Gold Mine in Australia

Not the safest "Mine" in Australia or the world but the safest Gold Mine. It is a vision, a goal and it's achievable - everyone knows this - how pervasive is that.

If you went to another site and asked employees what the company's goal was - what did the organisation want to achieve you may get a range of different responses - some people may not even know.

Our safety policy also states that we have a

"Totally Integrated Safety and Production Culture which ensures the well-being and job security of our employees".

This is what we're here for - this is what we've developed, this is our culture - this is the way we do things.

We went through change, great risks challenges and many sacrifices. People - the biggest asset were given faith, trust, they were made responsible and accountable. The rewards of this culture are enormous, not only does safety just happen, people are happier and a harmonious working environment has developed through team building. People have a sense of achievement, it can change their lifestyle, their perception of issues raised at work or at home.

It's a long road which requires a lot of work and dedication but the benefits are endless.

MANAGER MINING

Present

How many times have you run a meeting where you talked while everyone listened, got bored, couldn't wait to leave. How many times have you had meetings where out of frustration you have said "Well don't everyone speak at once".

People want to turn up at our meetings because they have been made interesting, informative and everyone wants to and can contribute. We achieve this by continuing to take risks pushing the limits to what can or can't be achieved. This might seem "off the planet" to many manager's but at our last three departmental meetings we have learned to juggle. As well as being able to impress all our friends, more importantly by using the skills to learn how to juggle using kinaesthetics, audio and visual techniques we are using these same skills to train people in the workplace, making training programmes more interesting and therefore people learn more effectively.

I am not saying that what has been achieved at Kanowna Belle will happen overnight. It won't, it has taken us two and a half years to get to where we are now. I would suggest that if prior to a meeting with your subordinates, you started handing out juggling balls, your sanity would be seriously questioned.

It has to be done a step at a time. Pick the most pressing issue you have on site. Put a huge effort into resolving the issue by involving your people, providing them with both time and resources. You will be surprised with what can be achieved.

A PROCESS TECHNICIAN'S (CRUSHER) PERSPECTIVE

I have been asked to talk to you about my perception of Kanowna Belle. I am known as one of the "originals" of which, I am pleased to say are still the majority on the process side of the site. I say I'm pleased because as you all would be aware turnover of staff is a major problem for any workplace; In "one industry" cities such as Kalgoorlie where the opportunity, for skilled personnel, in that industry, to change employment arises daily, it is doubly difficult to maintain a stable workforce. Unless, of course, one is offering uniqueness.

Throughout this talk I hope to highlight the uniqueness, through my opinions, because "uniqueness" is a bold statement, of Kanowna Belle. My employment history is to put it mildly, varied. I have worked as a boy Thursday (because that was the roster Thurs. Fri, Sat) after school in the local butchers store, to trainee assistance manager (glorified shelf stocker) with a national supermarket chain, building cars in a high volume production line situation, working front and back of a house at an international standard casino, to driving semi-trailer trucks in the W.A. desert (near W.A./N.T. borders). So with this history, I rightly or wrongly am able to use the term uniqueness when describing Kanowna Belle, because I have never seen policies implemented so successfully and effectively as at Kanowna. And believe me, several of these companies put the effort and attitude to create a "Kanowna environment" in the THB category - too hard basket and left it there.

Let me explain what I mean by giving a few examples.

Firstly, the truck driving company - I don't know how many people here today have had the opportunity/fun to drive on so-called "roads" in the central desert regions of Australia. Drivers in the recent Rally Australia race described them as the "best worst roads in the world". I would have to agree. Loose sandy dirt tracks with two tyre ruts in them for hundreds of kilometres on end hardly qualifies as a road in my book. Anyway, I was employed to drive semi-trailers on such roads. One snag however, as I explained to the boss, I had never before nor was I licensed to drive a semi-trailer. No drama, said the boss, the licensing people are coming here in two days I'll teach you. So, with only two days driving behind me, I was legally declared a proficient C class driver, after I passed the licensing test in the truck. I must add here that I can competently drive such vehicles now, but at the time, well, two days training of just forward driving, reversing was a later lesson, is really just a crash course, pun intended. Because as I think back it is surprising, given the circumstances, that I did not crash, although passing only three or four other vehicles on an eight hour trip does diminish the chances of that possibility.

This example would be funny if it were not true. It also highlights (or low lights) the need for specific yet easily useable training to be understood by the people who matter most, the people who will be in situations where effective training is crucial. This brings me back to the "Kanowna environment". Last year I was approached to produce a skills acquisitions course namely the Crusher Operations Training Course. The task I was given had only two specifics: 1. New trainees were to be able to safely and efficiently run the crusher 2. Produce it in four weeks time because that is when they are starting

I was allocated time away from the processing plant with the fullest confidence in me from my Senior Mill Supervisor, that I would easily produce the goods required.

Having worked previously at other sites on crushing systems, I felt that confidence was well placed. That is until like today, I stared and stared at a blank piece of paper thinking "what do I do now". But then, as is still the case today, everyone was more than willing to help, guide, suggest things that should or should not be included in the course, to supplement the knowledge I already had gathered. This ranged from the secretary's "oh no here he comes again" sarcasm, yet still suggesting and showing me various computer fonts and layouts available, to others leaving their own desks and work to show me how to overcome my "techno-fear" with the photocopier and overhead transparency making machine.

The end result is a two day training course consisting of a trainees manual (which they keep) and a trainers guide so that anyone with basic crusher knowledge can run the course, so that if I leave Kanowna Belle the course will still be as effective as it is today.

As proud as I was after having produced this course I was even prouder when I was told that I own the course, it was mine to keep provided that I left a copy with Kanowna Belle, if I left the company. Another example of the "uniqueness" mentioned earlier for I am sure if I had produced such a course anywhere else it would remain company property and would fade to a distant memory to me, that I could not display at subsequent interviews and thus lose the glow of achievement to me and others as to the quality of work I can produce.

Another example of the "Kanowna environment" uniqueness that I can testify to is when a whole worksite "Visions and Values" statement was to be implemented as with all major and minor changes, everyone on site was asked for input so as to define this vision and values more clearly. If everyone has the opportunity for input in such an important statement, it would not be seen by the majority as an unrealistic or unworkable statement issued by superiors who honestly would not have to work to this statement daily or hourly. So as this important questionnaire found its way into my hands my mind returned to a similar situation on the car production line.

One fine day on the relentlessly repetitive production line building cars, as best we could, my line boss tells us "down tools, all to the crib room". Strike, Strike, Strike, I'm thinking as we get there. But it was not to be, not that day anyway, the boss quietens us down and informs us the bleedin obvious.... "The foreign overseas manufacturer's are producing cheaper and better cars than we can". So he switches off the lights, switches on the O/H projector and informs all and sundry that as of this moment a Total Quality Control Management (TQCM) system is now in place in all plants of this factory. Well, that was news to me because unless I blinked and missed what happened, everything was exactly the same when I returned to work after the professionally slick presentation I had just witnessed. It was a case of no worker input, no new practices and after not quite two months, no more TQCM crack-down.

So, I was understandably sceptical when at Kanowna I found myself in this situation again, thinking here we go "same rubbish different bin". However the "Kanowna environment" uniqueness again came to the fore, as everyone had input into the statement it became a sensible user-friendly statement easily implemented and workable because the hard-copy (to coin another techno phrase) "Visions and Values" statement turned out to be an almost mirror image of attitudes and work practices that were already in place.

Unique? Maybe, but as I have said earlier if the energy at the start of any project is channelled correctly almost everything becomes easy and user-friendly to maintain.

Another uniqueness to the "Kanowna environment" is to do with external social factors. A highly underrated and often overlooked aspect to any workplace, particularly those dealing with continuous shift rosters. I'm

unsure whether KB is totally unique in this aspect, but it is in my opinion and I can give several examples. One is a personal account, the other a worksite attitude.

Kanowna Belle was officially commissioned in September 1993 and I commenced my employment in July 1993. At the time I was offered my position as Process Technician, I informed my Senior Mill Supervisor that before I accepted I would like to know about the possibility of time off for my second child's imminent birth (my wife was 7 months pregnant at the time). Yes, that is not going to be a problem I was told. As it turned out Kanowna not only allowed me time off from work to witness the birth (one hour into a night shift) but also an extra week to spend time with my wife and new child as well as celebratory flowers delivered to her room before I got there with mine. The "uniqueness" of this is that this happens to every child birth of partners at KB.

The work site attitudes to external social life unique to the "Kanowna environment" is that everyone on site has a similar approach to everyone else. As an example, a social league volleyball team (the Kanowna Cats) has several process technicians, an Administration Officer/Human Resources Officer, the Senior Mine Geologist and even the General Manager playing together with no hint of work site politics before or after games, win or lose (mostly lose lately).

The same can be said at social club functions. Every employee feels an equal sense of worth at KB and therefore has no hesitation to talk footy, family or films with any other member of the work force, regardless of official title. As such, as hard as it is to believe, there are no, us and them/mill rats and wombats cliches or groups. Most inter-departmental personnel know each other by name and that again only reinforces colleague attitudes to one another, all feeling that their particular job is as important as anyone else's.

To call the "Kanowna Belle environment" unique is a truth to me, as I hope I have shed a little light on. To call it magic however is way off. There was no magic wand, no genie with the "three wishes deal" and certainly it is no unobtainable desert mirage. No! Hard work, lots of effort, a willing work force treated with respect from bottom to top and those in the "front line" to be allowed input in everything from Vision and Values statements, to safety glasses type, to reagent dosing, to producing and conducting training courses, is what, in my opinion makes the "Kanowna environment" unique.

A PROCESS TECHNICIAN'S (DAYCREW) PERSPECTIVE

Thank you for that gracious introduction. Well, you have just been given an overall perspective of Kanowna Belle but now I'd like to give you my perspective of the operation.

I actually started at Kanowna Belle eighteen months ago and in that time have seen a great many changes in the work environment. At times it has seemed a slow evolution and at others a natural progression, not just in the plant but in the management, safety and training side of things.

On my first day at Kanowna Belle I was absolutely amazed by the friendliness of everyone on site. I was introduced to every single person and every one of them was smiling with a quick "pleased to meet you" and a genuine "anything I can do for you, just ask" attitude.

After awhile I was beginning to wonder if it was really sugar being put into their coffee.

On reflection of that day I think that they felt like I now feel at work, that is part of a family team and that Kanowna is not just your place of work but a place where you are given the chance to grow and develop with the company. As everyone is part of the team.

You are given the chance to be involved in decisions that may effect you and also be involved in developing policies and procedures.

Everyone is given the opportunity to develop training courses which they themselves own and the company use. The person who develops the course also runs the course, maintains and updates the course, thus keeping it alive. This way both the company and the employee benefit. The company by way of maximising its own people resources and the employee by way of self accomplishment and opportunity to develop themselves beyond their employment position.

I'd just like to add that the life of a process technician is not usually that exciting workwise, but when given the chance to be involved in the other aspects of the company it makes it quite an interesting position to be in. It is not often a company would allow a process technician to address a seminar on their behalf, is it?

The management at Kanowna have applied this kind of approach to all areas and have had great success. An example of this is in the area of Emergency Response. In each department a co-ordinator was sought to carry out a risk analysis, so that training, manpower and equipment needs could be identified and organised to be done. I was asked to be the co-ordinator for the Metallurgy department and proceeded to ask for persons wishing to be involved in such an exercise and future emergency response training. In all eighteen people put forth their name from our department which was fantastic. Who better to point out risks in a work environment than the ones who actually work there. Eventually a training plan of action was put together.

It was then decided to give everyone the opportunity to write up training modules for emergency response. I have myself just completed writing the first module which was for fire extinguishers and now others are following it up with fire hoses and reels, self contained breathing apparatus, snatch and grab rescue exercises and with many more to be developed.

There have been many modules already written by employees on mobile equipment, safety glasses, crusher operation, motor vehicle safety etc.

You feel great pride, and relief I might add, once it has come to the stage where you are ready to pass on your information to others in the training room.

By having the person who developed the course actually running it, it gives them the opportunity to develop new skills and expose themselves to the other department personnel.

I suppose what I'm trying to put across to you is that the culture developed at Kanowna is all about encouraging it's personnel to develop an interest in the company and to feel part of the company and in doing so prosper together.

Admittedly, not everyone wants to get involved in these things and are quite content as they are, but the ones that do are given the support to achieve their goals.

There is also the new development throughout the company called the skills acquisition scheme, which is to be integrated into salary reviews.

The basis of it is, that those who want to go forward, learn new skills and put in extra effort will be recognised in part through their annual review and the part of being given more opportunities to broaden their horizons.

The extent of commitment shown by people can be seen in the quality of their work and effort put in. To actually write and produce a training manual takes a great deal of time.

A lot of hours are done in your own time and there is no additional pay or requirement to do these extra hours, but it happens, as it is your project, your interest and it's for the company's and your benefit. How many companies do you know that get that sort of commitment from their employees without even asking?

Another point I'd like to raise is the issue of safety. At Kanowna Belle we have a safety policy but we have no actual safety department, safety committee or safety meetings, as safety itself is an integral part of our day to day jobs. It is everyone on sites responsibility and if an unsafe situation arises it is rectified. If a procedure is unsafe it is changed to be safe.

Everyone has the right to bring up safety issues whenever they arise so every person is involved in its practice, that is why it works.

The company's policy to involve the people who work there in all aspects of training, safety and management is why we picked up the Minex Award and why our policy goal "To be Australia's safest gold mine" is well within our reach.

Thank you.

A METALLURGICAL TECHNICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE

I have been "blessed" (not all would agree) with the gift of the gab, so when I was asked to write my piece for the "paper", I thought heavens to Betsy, where does one start, what does one say, how much should I write, please 'gab' don't fail me now.

Everyone said, throw down your ideas, key points, easier said than done, was my reaction. Here goes.....

I have worked for a few different mining companies but I've never experienced anything like Kanowna Belle, it's a unique experience. Prior to Kanowna Belle I had a short well deserved stint in the Hospitality Industry, so when a Metallurgical Technician's position arose I took it by the horns and thought, well Nat it's an opportunity too good to refuse, it'll be an intellectually challenging job, go for it.

As I was cruising down Yarri Rd. on my first day I was the usual nervous, apprehensive pre starter. Will I get on with everyone, will I fit into this niche at KB, most importantly will I enjoy the job, I guess when we leave a familiar surrounding, to head off to new horizons, we always hope we've made the right decision, in this instance I did.

As I pulled into the crowded carport, the site was still in construction and looked like one massive "ant" farm, there were cranes and construction crews everywhere, people busily doing their own part to achieve the ultimate goal, a state of the art gold mine.

I passed through security, well not quite, one has to be given a number, then a "mugshot" taken, - was this a place of employment or a prison. I was then taken to the Minproc portable office where all the new starters assembled, it wasn't long before my supervisor took me around and introduced me to everyone, I don't mean one or two people, I mean every KB employee from the Mine Manager to the Assistant Store Person, this was a first, I immediately felt part of the team, one of the "family" so to speak, this just wasn't the 'norm' with any other company I'd worked for. (This was the beginning of the KB experience.....!!)

As commissioning was approaching we all slowly began to disperse to our own area's, mine being a rather "flash" limestone building, from the outside that didn't look like a laboratory. Since we'd all spent quite a bit of time together during pre-commissioning we all got along well and we didn't feel the usual segregation, which was great when we went our own ways.

Since my time began with KB I've found that there is an open honest communication system. A system in which your individual or team thoughts and views are listened to and noted. Not all thoughts and suggestions are immediately acted on but hey, this is the real world and if we all had our own way all the time, can you

imagine the "spaghetti western" society we would live in. Our views are listened to yes and yes we do make certain changes but honestly not all are feasible or possible, sometimes we make unrealistic requests in the hope a miracle will happen but let's face it, that's human nature. My supervisor will sit, listen and explain the pro's and con's to the request (occasionally complaining about too many why's, but hey why's are brain food!!!) He'll explain why the request will or won't be granted, maybe technically we're asking the impossible (but I don't have a magic wand sitting on my desk for nothing), maybe there's another way to approach it or we've spent the budget funds already.

Our lab environment runs fairly smoothly, not without the odd hitch of course, but because everyone is treated equal, not one of the four Met. Tech. is placed on a pedestal, communication is the key. Constructive conversation and criticism is important. We are all praised and told that we've excelled in our efforts and that an important phase has passed extremely well because of our efforts. We don't always feel so great, many times I've gone home emotionally and physically drained, but hey, that's part and parcel of the deal. I've also gone home feeling especially pleased with myself.

KB management expresses to the employee's the importance of everyone and their ability, whether they are a shining star or another star in the milky way, it takes all the stars to light the sky, as it has taken all the employees to make KB what it is today.

I have been encouraged to take on the Arsenic Inductions for the Baghouse and Changerooms, my immediate supervisors have put their faith in me and truly believe my capabilities. The company sent me to Perth and I am now an Accredited Surface Ventilation Officer, yes me the Met. Tech., not the safety and training officer (as we don't have one) but the every day person on site. I felt quite privileged when asked to handle the Arsenic Area, something challenging and exciting, something I could get my teeth into and turn it into anything I wanted.

I am now doing all the Arsenic Inductions for both KBGM employees and contractors, it's a challenge and skill that will always be with me. It's not easy to stand in front of people and explain exactly what you want them to do and pin point with deadly accuracy the safety points, without scaring the pants off them. With the help of my supervisors I've been able to achieve this. Usually this "safety" area is handled by the Safety and Training Officer but as we don't have one, the different training aspects have been passed out amongst the employees. The Arsenic Area is in the Metallurgical side of things, so it's far more practical and sensible to have a Met. Dept. employee doing the training than another dept. This is one of the good things about KB, it's not one person "reaping" all the training and benefits but it's shared by everyone, I mean let's face it and be honest, who really is best suited to do the training, the person or people 'on the spot' completing the tasks of course. Keep things at grass roots and the place runs happier and smoother.

The company encourages personnel growth. Not everyone is cut out to do certain tasks but everyone is special and entitled to show their growth and ability. This happens at KB, KB promotes growth to everyone not just the boss's but all who truly want it.

Courses and awards are shared amongst site, this is so everyone gets a "taste" of responsibility. Everyone wants responsibility in one way or another, they want to feel important and prove their trustworthiness. The people on site know more about what's going on than the powers to be, so why not take this opportunity and run, open up, let the employee's help to make changes, this is the 'happening' thing. A place whether it be a workplace or not, is only as good as the people who make it. I think that's why KB is successful because people take time and pride in the workplace.

It's a team effort, not certain individual or management but all who walk through the security gates to commence shift. Management has set goal's but it has taken hard dedicated employee's who have made the goal achievable and KB the successful mine site it is today.

A PLANT SUPERVISOR'S PERSPECTIVE

When I first started at Kanowna Belle I could tell it was going to be different. Maybe it was the green industrial paint everywhere on the plant, the environmentally friendly theme or the look of the new administration building.

I could tell this place was going to be a permanent fixture. This place was going to be big. Little did I know how big it was going to be.

I was employed as a Senior Process Technician in June 93. When I knew I had the job I was rapt, at that stage the only thought going through my mind was "great I don't have to write mill operator on my departure card when I leave the country any more".

I was part of the initial recruitment of fifteen people to commission the plant. We all came from different backgrounds, had varying degrees of plant experience and most of us had commissioning experience under our belts.

Most of the Process Technicians were on site 6-8 weeks before the mills were turned. This gave us a good chance to become as familiar with the plant as we could. We were able to look at equipment before it was installed and while it was being installed. One thing that had 95% of us stumped was the computerised control system that we were going to be using, because for most of us it was the first time we had seen them, let alone been that close to one. That wasn't seen as a major problem. A course was organised for us to familiarise ourselves with the control system and it proved invaluable when commissioning time came.

Because a lot of work and planning went into commissioning the crusher/mills and leach circuit, it came and went without too many problems. We ran five crews of three during commissioning of the crusher/mills/leach circuits, but fourteen months later another technician was required for the flotation commissioning and when the roaster came on line we required even more.

Today we have a total of 31 people running the plant, each crew has a senior process technician and 4 process techs. We also have 3 crusher technicians, 4 relief techs. and 2 in the goldroom.

Because we have commissioned a lot of circuits in the last 2 years we required experienced operators, now we can start employing people without experience and start giving back to the community and mining industry what we took. 29 of the 31 people work on a continuous roster of 7 N/S, 7 A/S, 7 D/S, 5 D/S. Shifts are only 8 hours and with this particular roster everyone has 2 weekends off a month.

Because we only run 8 hour shifts a lot of people are a lot happier because their quality of life has improved. Our shift workers are now spending more time at home with spouses/children than they are with workmates. From day one we were always given the freedom to try new and different ways of doing things. If it worked the attitude was "good", if it didn't work, it was, "good on you for having a go".

Senior Process Technicians run their shifts as they want to, they plan and have their own ideas of how they want the Process Technician training to take place. Multiskilling to us, like many others, is the best way to run a plant. People don't get bored, they're learning all the time. Seniors realise this and work hard towards that goal of having a more versatile crew. In the last two and a half years 9 technicians have left Kanowna Belle, that's not bad considering the number of people we employ and area in which we are. By people leaving though, it has created many opportunities for others to move up. If a position needs to be filled we will use the resources we have. All positions, where they can be, are filled internally. This has special significance for me as six months ago I was promoted to Plant Supervisor. My responsibilities and job description now cover a broader range but the main difference now is that the number of people I am now responsible, accountable for and to.

Most people probably want to know what our secret is, what is so special about Kanowna Belle, I work there and I can tell you that I can't even answer that one. All I can say is that from day one everything was planned and everyone one put the effort into making Kanowna what it is today. Two and a half years later I finally worked out just how significant the colour of the paint was, yes it was to be environmentally friendly, the plant is here for 20 years, let's get it right, right from the start.

That's what I think Kanowna Belle is all about.

A PROCESS TECHNICIANS (RELIEF) PERSPECTIVE

As a Relief Process Technician, I would now like to talk about my own perspective of the way that Kanowna Belle functions as an ongoing process. From it's inception it started out not to be different for the sake of being different, but to improve on, and where necessary, transform the way in which things were done and the perceptions held by the individuals throughout the workforce. This was apparent to me on the day that I commenced employment there. I was introduced to a range of people from my immediate colleagues, people in the Administration and Mining Departments through to Paul Hallam, the Registered Mine Manager. What stood out for me during these introductions was the enthusiasm, friendliness and sense of purpose that each of these people displayed which started to give me a sense that "Hey, this place operates in a different way from any other company I've worked for". The rest of the day was taken up with a site familiarisation which included an overview of the pit operation and an induction which was very thorough and documented. I was impressed by the pains taken to ensure that I was informed about the structure of the company, the extent of the training programmes and the focus on the well-being of each member of the workforce. It was clear at the end of the day that nothing had been left to chance.

The following day I had a discussion with Steve Wood, the OHS & Training Facilitator during which he outlined the goals and structure of the company which include the areas of safety, personal and company responsibility, the opportunities for advancement and personal growth within the company and the respect that can be shown to each individual by eliminating derogatory titles like "Mill Rat", "Rock Ape" or "Wombat" and others that are common within the industry.

We discussed the policies and procedures documents which were written with a view to representing what actually takes place on the minesite and not a set of lofty ideals that have no relevance to the "Grass-Roots" level. We discussed the safety standards that are in force in other places I have worked and how the issue of safety is approached at Kanowna Belle, examples being that we have no specific safety meetings, or awards for no LTI's, instead, we had a departmental safety policy which is an integrated part of the way that each individual conducts themselves in the normal course of their duties. It is, after all, each person who has the biggest interest in their own well-being and ensuring that they leave the site at the end of the day with their bodies as whole as when they started. The company's commitment is to provide the facilities that support the well-being of all it's employees. By not having safety meetings, nothing gets "saved up" for the next meeting, issues can be resolved as soon as a concern is raised. Also, I became aware that as well as being responsible for safety within my work area, I am also a person who can be held accountable for what takes place in my work area.

He told me that part of the criteria in selecting the management team was their willingness to listen to the concerns of their subordinates which is a major factor in ensuring that problems that arise are dealt with appropriately and the employees are made to feel that their opinion is valid and of value which ensures that they will continue to approach management with their points of view, not only on safety issues, but ways that procedures can be improved and any other issues that arise.

I left that interview with a new perspective on the way that an operation can be run and a feeling that I could make a positive contribution to the standards that were being applied at Kanowna Belle.

Training courses are provided for specific areas of the plant which cover things like tagging out procedures, use and care of breathing apparatus, reagent handling, hearing protection and others.

Before operating any mobile equipment on site, any new employee must first undergo a theoretical training session relevant to that equipment and then pass a practical evaluation before being ticketed to operate that equipment.

We also have performance appraisals which are conducted annually with a six monthly review and carried out between each employee and their immediate supervisor. They separately answer a pre-set list of questions which cover areas like knowledge of their job, degree of co-operation, attitudes to their job, what projects they would like to take on in the next twelve months and their five and ten year goals. When the employee and their supervisor get together and compare notes, there is room for frank and honest discussion about what is achievable and what is being achieved. At the end of the discussion it is my experience that I have a clearer picture of my role within the company, idea of where I am going in the company and a feeling of rapport with my supervisor. This exercise does not cost much but the positive effects are demonstrable.

During my performance appraisal in 1994 I put that for my twelve month project I would like to take on responsibility for the mobile equipment training course which was currently being conducted by the OHS & T Facilitator. Little did I know what I was taking on! While the company encourages people on the shop floor to take responsibility for the training programmes on site, to ensure that each employee owns for themselves the training that they deliver, it has to be put together by that person. It would have been easy to give me the package already being presented, which is what I had half expected, but I was required to research and collate all the material that was to be included. My brief was that it had to include, so that the trainees were aware of, both Dept. of Minerals and Energy regulations, and be site specific so that the manual covers both the specific items of equipment on site, as well as various tasks that the trainee would be required to perform competently.

During the process of compiling the manual, I had the opportunity to observe my almost unlimited capacity for procrastination when things get a bit sticky. But, as there was a number of new personnel on site who could not operate essential mobile equipment without first having been through the training course I was putting together, there was a growing incentive for me to keep pushing through the work until finally there was a light at the end of the tunnel. That experience alone was invaluable to me as I have found since, that when the urge to defer something that comes up, I can put that feeling aside and get on with the job at hand.

I now achieve more!

While putting the manual together I had to liaise with the administration personnel frequently to get my work typed up and consequently learned a lot about office procedures, what can be done with the aid of a computer and developed a real respect for the way in which the person responsible for the typing fitted in my work on top of her already full workload. All this is far removed from the course of my normal work and may seem irrelevant, but the intangible benefit is that I feel like I work in a truly integrated environment which works in a spirit of co-operation and a willingness for other people to succeed.

Presenting the training course was again a new challenge and opportunity for personal growth. While I am generally perceived as being a fairly quiet and reserved person I now have the responsibility of representing the company in delivering the safety course in a way that was relevant and meaningful and that the trainees would still remember years down the track, which meant that my message had to be clear and concise even though there was a lot of information to get through. I see now what is meant by "employee ownership of training programmes" while working around the plant. I take note of the way that the mobile equipment is operated by the people I have trained and very seldom find the need to remind them of procedures or rules that they learned of during the theory part of the training. For the company, this is a very positive aspect of

having people in the field running the training courses rather than having a "training officer" who is not on hand to observe the results of his/her efforts. I also have the constant opportunity to review and improve on the type of instruction I offer.

In terms of personal growth, the spin-offs for me have been tremendous. I find I now work through difficulties rather than putting them to one side, I feel more able to get my meaning across to people; I am more assertive than I was before I took on responsibility for the training; I have got to know my colleagues on a more personal level and the job satisfaction that I experience has increased many fold through expanding my job description into an area that I had not previously considered, I also notice that while I used to have one set of safety standards for work and another for home, there is now no distinction; when using power tools and other equipment at home, I first ensure that I am wearing the appropriate safety equipment.

For the company, the spin-offs I perceive from having people on the floor conducting the training's are; a greater sense of job satisfaction and therefore a lower staff turnover; people become more accountable for what takes place in their work area; A higher level of communication takes place, levels of co-operation between co-workers and departments improve due to a sense of being part of a team.

I have heard the story told of two men employed as stonemasons, in a large workforce, building a cathedral. When asked what they were doing, the first man replied "I am a stonemason; I'm building a wall". The second man responded "I am a stonemason; I am helping to build a cathedral." Working at Kanowna Belle has given me a sense of not just being another operator, but an artisan contributing to something that is far greater than the sum total of its parts. The benefits are experienced by not only Kanowna Belle, but the North group of companies, and, ultimately, the entire industry itself benefits.

SUMMARY

As we near the end of this paper I still haven't forgotten that there is one simple message that I am going to give you - it's still coming.

But for now I can't conclude without telling you what a major drama we had putting this paper together.

To use a quote which came directly from our General Manager's wife, Christine said "How can you tell people in 40 minutes what it has taken two and a half years to achieve".

Well that's exactly how we feel. I'm not even sure if this paper has hit the mark for you today?

The point is that safety is so simple, this approach is simple.

We initially went through all the agony of researching for this paper - who were the target audience, what were their positions, how many CEO'S, how many Mine Manager's, how many Safety Officers, what was the breakdown.

What was it that people wanted to hear, what were the groups needs. All these items and more were researched extensively and were addressed and we developed a paper. But when looking at the completed draft document it wasn't us. So we asked for an extension and went for Version Two. This was an absolute "rip snorter". It listed all the principles for contemporary safety management it was laced with philosophical safety statements, it had exercises on creating safety culture, it contained practical strategies to enhance safety in the workplace but again after the first draft it wasn't quite us.

So we hit Version Three and yes we asked for another extension.

By the way, where ever you are Sue McCoy thanks for being so patient with us. Anyway, guess what, this latest version wasn't quite right either so we pulled our heads together, got representatives from each work area covering all levels of the operational hierarchy and we knocked up the bulk of this paper in just one day.

It contained perspective's from lots of different people. It's in our peoples own language, it's different, it's meaningful to us.

Now, we feel that this paper is reflective of who we are. We forgot about doing all the traditional things like I previously mentioned, who are the audience, what are their needs, etc. We just said let's say what is important, to us and that's the way we've handled safety.

There is however one point that I would like to make clear especially after using the rocket analogy and that is:

By no means do we, Kanowna Belle see ourselves as being there, at the end point, where everyone is doing really wonderful things

We certainly are not there

In the overall scheme of things we are probably about twelve percent of the way there.

We have got a taste for what things will be like and we are focused on where we are going.

We have invested heavily in the future so the operation can continue to grow and the culture can get stronger.

And as people change out others can harvest the crops from the seeds that have been planted.

As I have said we have invested heavily in the future. We have laid the foundation stones and it will be a few years yet before the full potential of Kanowna Belle is realised and then it will be a few years after that, that it will be realised what the people have done!

CONCLUSION

In concluding I would like to specifically address the topic of our paper Contemporary Safety Management.

The way we see safety at Kanowna is, as an output, from a lot of inputs.

Safety is just an indicator to how well your business is performing overall.

We use safety on site as a vehicle. A vehicle that helps develop our whole organisation. A vehicle that every person can drive, something everybody can be involved in.

Safety is one of those items that crosses every boundary in an organisation.

So why not use Safety to its fullest potential.

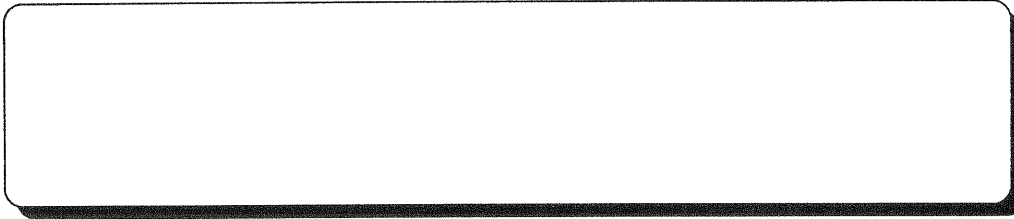
This area has a lot to offer.

Integrate it with your whole business approach and results will occur.

Treat it as you do with all the other aspects of your business and you're bound to see improvements.

At the end of the day most of us believe in this approach, we believe that this approach can work and we know deep within our hearts that this is true. Hopefully this presentation has provided you with the way we see it can be done. This leads me directly to my concluding statement, the one simple message that really is the only thing I have to say, the one thing that summarises everything I've said and puts it all into perspective. The one thing that explains why many companies don't take this approach

My message is simple, my message is this:



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